

T H E  
ASSIGNATION:  
O R,  
Love in a Nunnery.

As it is ACTED,  
At the *THEATRE-ROYAL*.

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Written by *JOHN DRYDEN* Servant  
to His MAJESTY.

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*Succesſum dea dira negat* —————  
Virg.

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L O N D O N:  
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*New Exchange*. 1673.





TO MY  
MOST HONOUR'D FRIEND

Sir CHARLES SEDLEY, Baronet.

Sir,



He Design of *Dedicating Playes*, is as common and unjust, as that of desiring Seconds in a *Duel*. 'Tis engaging our Friends (it may be) in a senceless quarrel, where they have much to venture, without any concernment of their own.

I have declar'd thus much before-hand, to prevent you from suspicion, that I intend to interest either your judgment or your kindness, in defending the Errours of this *Comedy*. It succeeded ill in the representation, against the opinion of many the best Judges of our Age, to whom you know I read it e're it was presented publickly. Whether the fault was in the Play it self, or in the lameness of the Action, or in the number of its Enemies, who came resolv'd to damn it for the Title, I

will not now dispute : that wou'd be too like the little satisfaction which an unlucky Gamester finds in the relation of every cast by which he came to lose his Money. I have had formerly so much success, that the miscarriage of this Play was onely my giving fortune her revenge : I ow'd it her ; and she was indulgent that she exacted not the paiment long before. I will therefore deal more reasonably with you, than any Poet has ever done with any Patron: I do not so much as oblige you for my sake to pass two ill hours in reading of my Play. Think, if you please, that this Dedication is onely an occasion I have taken to do my self the greatest honour imaginable with Posterity ; that is, to be recorded in the number of those Men whom you have favour'd with your Friendship and esteem. For, I am well assur'd, that besides the present satisfaction I have, it will gain me the greatest part of my reputation with after-Ages, when they shall find me valuing my self on your kindness to me : I may have reason to suspect my own credit with them, but I have none to doubt of yours. And they who perhaps wou'd forget me in my Poems, wou'd remember me in this *Epistle*.

This was the course which has formerly been practis'd by the Poets of that Nation who were Masters of the Universe. *Horace* and *Ovid*, who had little reason to distrust their Immortality ; yet took occasion to speak with honour of *Virgil*, *Varius*, *Tibullus*, and *Propertius* their Contemporaries : as if they sought in the testimony



testimony of their Friendship a farther evidence of their fame. For my own part, I, who am the least amongst the Poets, have yet the fortune to be honour'd with the best Patron, and the best Friend. For, (to omit some Great Persons of our Court, to whom I am many wayes oblig'd, and who have taken care of me, even amidst the Exigencies of a War,) I can make my boast to have found a better *Mæcenas* in the person of my Lord Treasurer *Clifford*, and a more Elegant *Tibullus* in that of Sir *Charles Sedley*. I have chosen that Poet to whom I would resemble you, not onely because I think him at least equal, if not superiour to *Ovid* in his *Elegies*: nor because of his quality for he was (you know) a Roman Knight as well as *Ovid*: but for his Candour, his Wealth, his way of Living, and particularly because of this testimony which is given him by *Horace*, which I have a thousand times in my mind apply'd to you.

*Non tu Corpus eras sine pectore; Dii tibi formam,  
Dii tibi divitias dederant, artemq; fruendi.*

*Quid voveat dulei Nutricula majus Alumno*

*Quam sapere, & fari possit quæ sentiat, & cui  
Gratia, forma, valetudo contingat abunde;*

*Et mundus victus, non deficiente crumena?*

Certainly the Poets of that Age enjoy'd much happiness in the Conversation and Friendship of one another. They imitated the best way of Living, which was to pursue an innocent and inoffensive Pleasure; that which one of the Ancients called *Eruditam voluptatem*

*taseat*

*tatem.* We have, like them, our Genial Nights; where our discourse is neither too serious, nor too light; but alwayes pleasant, and for the most part instructive: the raillery neither too sharp upon the present, nor too censorious on the absent; and the Cups onely such as will raise the Conversation of the Night, without disturbing the business of the Morrow. And thus far not only the Philosophers, but the Fathers of the Church have gone, without lessening their Reputation of good Manners, or of Piety. For this reason I have often Laugh'd at the ignorant and ridiculous Descriptions, which some Pedants have given of the Wits (as they are pleas'd to call them :) which are a Generation of Men as unknown to them, as the People of *Tartary* or the *terra Australis* are to us. And therefore as we draw *Giants* and *Anthropophagi* in those vacances of our *Maps*, where we have not Travell'd to discover better; so those wretches Paint leudness, Atheism, Folly, ill-Reasoning, and all manner of Extravagances amongst us for want of understanding what we are. Oftentimes it so falls out, that they have a particular picque to some one amongst us; and then they immediately interest Heaven in their quarrel: As 'tis an usual trick in Courts; when one designs the ruine of his Enemy, to disguise his malice with some concernment of the Kings: and to revenge his own cause, with pretence of vindicating the Honour of his Master. Such Wits as they describe, I have never been so unfortunate to meet in your Company

pany: but have often heard much better Reasoning at your Table, than I have encounter'd in their Books. The Wits they describe, are the Fops we banish: for Blasphemy and Atheism, if they were neither Sin nor Ill Manners, are Subjects so very common, and worn so Thredbare, that people who have sence avoid them, for fear of being suspected to have none. It calls the good Name of their Wit in question, as it does the Credit of a Citizen when his Shop is fill'd with Trumperies, and Painted Titles in stead of Wares: we conclude them Bancrupt to all manner of understanding: and, that to use Blasphemy, is a kind of applying Pigeons to the Soles of the Feet: it proclaims their Fancy as well as judgment, to be in a desperate condition. I am sure for your own particular, if any of these Judges had once the happiness to converse with you, to hear the Candour of your Opinions; how freely you commend that wit in others, of which you have so large a Portion your self; how unapt you are to be censorious; with how much easiness you speak so many things, and those so Pointed, that no other Man is able to excell, or perhaps to reach by Study; they wou'd, in stead of your Accusers, become your Profelites. They wou'd reverence so much good Sence, and so much good Nature in the same person: and come, like the Satyre, to warm themselves at that Fire, of which they were ignorantly afraid, when they stood at distance. But, you have too great a Reputation to be wholly free from Censure: 'tis a fine which Fortune sets upon all extraordinary,

ordinary persons, and from which you should not wish to be deliver'd till you are dead. I have been, us'd by my Critiques much more severely, and have more reason to complain, because I am deeper tax'd for a less Estate. I am ridiculously enough accus'd to be a contemner of Universities, that is in other words, an Enemy of Learning: without the Foundation of which I am sure no Man can pretend to be a Poet. And if this be not enough, I am made a Detractor from my Predecessors, whom I confess to have been my Masters in the Art. But this latter was the accusation of the best Judge, and almost the best Poet in the Latine Tongue. You find *Horace* complaining, that for taxing some Verses in *Lucilius*, he himself was blam'd by others, though his Design was no other than mine now, to improve the Knowledge of Poetry: and it was no defence to him, amongst his Enemies, any more than it is for me, that he Prais'd *Lucilius* where he deserv'd it; *Paginatâ laudatur eâdem*. 'Tis for this reason I will be no more mistaken for my good meaning: I know I honour *Ben Johnson* more than my little Critiques, because without vanity I may own, I understand him better. As for the Errors they pretend to find in me, I could easily show them that the greatest part of them are Beauties: and for the rest, I could recriminate upon the best Poets of our Nation, if I could resolve to accuse another of little faults, whom at the same time I admire for greater Excellencies. But I have neither concernment enough upon me to write any thing in my own Defence, nei-  
ther

ther will I gratifie the ambition of two wretched Scrib-  
lers, who desire nothing more than to be Answer'd.  
I have not wanted Friends, even amongst Strangers,  
who have defended me more strongly, than my con-  
temptible Pedant cou'd attaque me. For the other:  
he is onely like *Fungoso* in the Play, who follows  
the Fashion at a distance, and adores the *Fastidious  
Brisk* of *Oxford*. You can bear me witness, that I  
have not consideration enough for either of them to  
be angry: Let *Mævius* and *Bævius* admire each other,  
I wish to be hated by them and their Fellows, by  
the same reason for which I desire to be lov'd by you.  
And I leave it to the world, whether their judgment of  
my Poetry ought to be preferr'd to yours; though  
they are as much prejudic'd by their Malice, as I desire  
you should be led by your Kindness, to be partial to,  
Sir,

*Your most Humble*

*and most Faithful Servant*

**John Dryden.**

# Prologue.

**P**rologues, like Bells to Churches, toul you in  
With Chimeing Verse ; till the dull Playes begin:  
With this sad difference though, of Pit and Pae ;  
You damn the Poet, but the Priest damns you.

But Priests can treat you at your own expence:  
And, gravely, call you Fooles, without offence.  
Poets, poor Devils, have ne'r your Folly shewn  
But, to their cost, you prov'd it was their own.  
For, when a Fop's presented on the Stage,  
Straight all the Coxcombs in the Town ingage:  
For his deliverance, and revenge they joyn :  
And grunt, like Hogs, about their Captive Swine.  
Your Poets daily split upon this shelve :  
You must have Fooles, yet none will have himself.  
Or, if in kindness, you that leave would give,  
No man could write you at that rate you live :  
For some of you grow Fops with so much haste,  
Riot in nonsense, and commit such waste,  
'Twould Ruine Poets should they spend so fast. }  
He who made this, obserw'd what Farces hit,  
And durst not disoblige you now with wit.  
But, Gentlemen, you overdo the Mode :  
You must have Fooles out of the common Rode.  
Th' unnatural strain'd Buffoon is onely taking :  
No Fop can please you now of Gods own making.

Pardon

Pardon our Poet if he speaks his Mind,  
You come to Plays with your own Follies lin'd :  
Small Fooles fall on you, like small showers, in vain:  
Your own oyl'd Coates keep out all common raine.  
You must have Mamamouchi, such a Fop  
As would appear a Monster in a Shop :  
Hee'l fill your Pit and Boxes to the brim,  
Where, Ram'd in Crowds, you see your selves in him.  
Sure there's some spell our Poet never knew,  
In bullibabilah da, and Chu, chu, chu.  
But Marabarab sahem most did touch you,  
That is : Oh how we love the Mamamouchi!  
Grimace and habit sent you pleas'd away:  
You damn'd the Poet, and cry'd up the Play.

This thought had made our Author more uneasy,  
But that he hopes I'm Fool enough to please ye :  
But here's my griefe ; though Nature joyn'd with art,  
Have cut me out to act a Fooling Part ;  
Yet, to your praise, the few wits here will say,  
'Twas imitating you taught Haynes to Play.

Persons



## Persons Represented.

	By
Duke of Mantova . . . . .	Major Mobun.
Prince Frederick his Son . . . . .	Mr. Kynaston.
Aurelian a Roman Gentleman . . . . .	Mr. Hart.
Camillo his Friend . . . . .	Mr. Burt.
Mario Governor of Rome . . . . .	Mr. Cartwright.
Ascanio, Page of Honour to the Prince . . . . .	Mrs. Reeve.
Benito, Servant to Aurelian . . . . .	Mr. Haynes.
Valerio, Confident to the Duke . . . . .	
Fabio, Servant to Mario . . . . .	
Sophronia, Abbess of the Torr'di Specchi . . . . .	Mrs. James.
Lucretia, a Lady design'd to be a Nun . . . . .	Mrs. Marshall.
Hippolita, a Nun . . . . .	Mrs. Knepe.
Laura and Violetta	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">           } Sisters, Nieces to Mario.         </div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-left: 10px;">           } Mrs. Bowtel.              } Mrs. Cox.         </div>

Scene, R O M E.



(1)

T H E

# ASSIGNATION:

O, R,

## Love in a Nunnery.

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SCENE ROME.

A Great Glass Plac'd.

*Enter Benito, with a Guittar in his hand.*

*Benito  
bowing to  
the Glass.* **S**AVE you, sweet Signior *Benito*; by my faith I am  
glad to see you look so bonily to day: Gad, Sir,  
every thing becomes you to a miracle! your Per-  
ruke, your Cloaths, your Hat, your Shoo-tyes; and,  
Gad, Sir, let me tell you, you become every thing;  
you walk with such a grace, and you bow so pliantly——

*Aurelian within.* *Benito*, Where are you, Sirrah?

*Ben.* Sirrah! That my damn'd Master should call a man of my  
extraordinary indowments, Sirrah! A man of my indowments?  
Gad, I ask my own pardon, I mean, a person of my indowments;  
for a man of my parts and tallents, though he be but a *Valet de  
Chambre*, is a person; and, let me tell my Master——  
Gad, I frown too, as like a person as any Jack-Gentleman  
of'em all; but, Gad, when I do not frown, I am an absolute  
beauty: whatever this Glass says to the contrary: and, if this

B

Glass

# The Assignment; or,

Glass deny it, 'tis a base, lying Glass, so I'll tell it to its face, and kick it down into the bargain.

*Aurelia within.* Why *Benito*, How long shall we stay for you?

*Ben.* I come, Sir. What the Devil would he have?  
But, by his favour, I'll first survey my Dancing, and my Singing.

*He plays on the Guittar, and Dances and Sings to the Glass.*  
I think that was not amiss: I think so. Gad, I can *Lay down*  
Dance, and play no longer, I am in such a rapture with *the Guittar*.  
my self. What a villanous base fate have I! with all these excellencies, and a profound wit, and yet to be a Serving-man!

*Enter Aurelian and Camillo.*

*Aur.* Why, you Slave, you Dog, you Son of twenty Fathers, am I to be serv'd at this rate eternally? A pox o'your conceited coxcomb.

*Camillo.* Nay, prythee, *Aurelian*, be not angry.

*Aur.* You do not know this Rogue, as I do, *Camillo*. Now, by this Guittar, and that great looking-glass, I am certain how he has spent his time. He courts himself every morning in that Glass, at least an hour: there admires his own person, and his parts, and studies postures and grimaces, to make himself yet more ridiculous, than he was born to be.

*Cam.* You wrong him sure.

*Aur.* I do; for he is yet more fool than I can speak him: I never sent him on a message, but he runs first to that Glass, to practice how he may become his errand. Speak, Is this a lye, Sirrah?

*Ben.* I confess, I have some kindness for the mirror.

*Aur.* The mirror! there's a touch of his Poetry too; he could not call it a Glass. Then the Rogue has the impudence to make Sonnets, as he calls 'em; and, which is a greater impudence, he sings 'em too: there's not a Street in all *Rome* which he does not night'y disquiet with his villanous Serenades: with that Guittar there, the younger brother of a Cittern, he frights away the Watch; and for his Violin, it squeaks so lewdly, that Sir *Tibert* in the gutter mistakes him for his Mistress. 'Tis a meer Cat-call.

*Cam.* Is this true *Benito*?

*Ben.*

*Ben. to Cam. aside.* My Master, Sir, may say his pleasure; I divert my self sometimes with hearing him: Alas, good Gentleman, 'tis not given to all persons to penetrate into Mens parts and qualities; but I look on you, Sir, as a man of judgment, and therefore you shall hear me play and sing.

*He takes up the Guittar and begins.*

*Aur.* Why, you invincible Sor you, will nothing mend you? Lay't down, or——

*Ben. to Camillo.* Do ye see, Sir, this Enemy to the Muses? he will not let me hold forth to you.

*[Lays down the Guittar.*

*O Envy, and Ignorance, Whither will you!——But, Gad, before I'll suffer my parts to be kept in obscurity——*

*Aur.* What will you do; Rascal?

*Ben.* I'll take up the Guittar, and suffer heroically.

*He Playes, Aure. Kicks.*

*Aur.* What? Do you Mutiny?

*Ben.* Ay, do, kick till your toes ake; I'll be baffled in my Musick by ne'r a foot in Christendome.

*Aur.* I'll put you out of your time, with a vengeance to you.

*As Aurelian kicks harder, Benito sings faster, and sometimes cries out.*

*Cam. holding Aur.* Nay, then 'tis time to stickle. Hold, *Aurelian*, prythee spare *Benito*, you know we have occasion for him.

*Aur.* I think that was well kick'd.

*Ben.* And I think that was well Sung too.

*Cam.* Enough, *Aurelian*.

*Ben.* No, Sir; let him proceed to discourage vertue, and see what will come on't.

*Cam.* Now to our business: but we must first instruct *Benito*.

*Aur.* Be rul'd by me, and do not trust him: I prophesie he'll spoil the whole affair; he has a Worm in's head as long as a Conger, a brain so barren of all sence, and yet so fruitful of foolish plots, that if he does not all things his own way, yet at least he'll ever be mingling his designs with yours, and go halves with you, so that what with his ignorance, what with his plotting, he'll be sure to ruine you, with an intencion to serve you. For my part I had turn'd him off

long since; but that my wife Father, commanded me the contrary.

*Cam.* Still you speak, as if what we did were choice, and not necessity: you know their Uncle is suspicious of me, and consequently jealous of all my Servants; but if we employ yours, who is not suspected, because you are a stranger; I doubt not to get an Assignment with the younger Sister.

*Aur.* Well, use your own way, *Camillo*: but if it ever succeed, with his management——

*Cam.* You must understand then, *Benito*, that this old Signior *Mario*, has two Nieces, with one of which I am desperately in Love, and ——

*Ben. aside to him,* I understand you already, Sir, and you desire Love reciprocal: Leave your business in my hands, and, if it succeed not, think me no wiser than my Master.

*Cam.* Pray take me with you. These Sisters are great Beauties and vast Fortunes; but, by a Clause in their Fathers Will, if they Marry without their Uncles Consent, are to forfeit all. Their Uncle, who is covetous, and base to the last degree, takes advantage of this Clause, and under pretence of not finding fit Matches for them, denies his consent to all who love 'em.

*Ben.* Denies 'em marriage: very good, Sir.

*Cam.* More than this, he refuses access to any Sutor, and immures 'em in a mean apartment on the garden side, where he barbarously debars 'em from all humane Society.

*Ben.* Uses them most barbarously: Still better and better.

*Cam.* The younger of these *Sisters*, *Violetta*, I have seen often in the Garden, from the Balcony in this Chamber, which looks into it, have divers times shot Tickers on the point of an Arrow, which She has taken, and by the signes she made me I find they were not ill receiv'd.

*Ben.* I'll tell you now, just such an Amour as this had I once with a young Lady, that——

*Aur.* Quote your self agen, you Rogue, and my feet shall renew their acquaintance with your Buttocks.

*Cam.* Dear *Benito*, take care to convey this Ticker to *Violetta*: I saw her just now go by to the next Chappel; be sure to stand ready to give her Holy-water, and slip the Ticker into the hand of her Wo-

man

# Love in a Nunnery.

5

man *Beatrix*; And take care the elder Sister *Laura* sees you not, for she knows nothing of our Amour.

*Ben.* A word to the wife.

Have you no Service to *Laura*?

[To Aurelian.

*Aur.* None that I shall trouble you withall: I'll see first what returns you make from this Voyage, before I put in my venture with you. Away; be gone, Mr. *Mercury*.

*Ben.* I fly, Mr. *Jupiter*.

[Exit.

*Aur.* This Lady *Laura* I have seen from your Balcone, and was seen by her: methought, too, she lookt with a languishing eye upon me, as who should say, Are you a man, and have no pitty for a poor distressed Virgin? For my part, I never found so much disposition in my self to Love any woman at first sight: handsome she is, of that I am certain.

*Cam.* And has Wit, I dare assure you; but I have not heard she has admitted of any Gallantry.

*Aur.* Her hour is not come yet; she has not met with a man to Love: when that happens (as I am resolv'd to push my fortune) you shall see that, as her love warms, her vertue will melt down, and dissolve in it; for there's no such Baud to a woman, as her own wit is.

*Cam.* I look upon the Affignation, as certain: Will you promise me to go? You and *Benito* shall walk in the Garden, while I search the Nymph within the shades; one thing I had forgot to tell you, that our General of the Church, the Duke of *Mantova*, and the Prince his Son, are just approaching the Gates of *Rome*: Will you go see the Ceremony of their Entrance?

*Aur.* With all my heart. They say, he has behav'd himself gallantly against the *French*, at their return from *Naples*: besides, I have a particular knowledge of young Prince *Frederick*, ever since he was last at our *Venetian* Carnival.

*Cam.* Away, then, quickly; least we miss the Solemnity.

*Exeunt.*

*Enter Laura, and Violetta striving about a Letter, which*

*Laura holds.*

*Vio.* Let it go, I say:

*Lau.* I say, let you go.

*Vio.*

*Vio.* Nay, sweet Sister *Laura*.

*Lau.* Nay, dear *Violetta*, 'tis in vain to contend, I am resolv'd I'll see it. [Plucks the Paper from *Violetta*.]

*Vio.* But I am resolv'd you shall not read it. I know not what authority this is which you assume, or what priviledge a year or two can give you, to use this Sovereignty over me.

*Lau.* Do you rebell young Gentlewoman? I'll make you know I have a double right over you: one, as I have more years; and the other as I have more wit.

*Vio.* Though I am not all Ayr and Fire, as you are, yet that little wit I have, will serve to conduct my Affairs, without a Government.

*Lau.* No, Gentlewoman, but it shall not: are you fit at Fifteen to be trusted with a Maidenhead? 'Tis as much your betters can manage at full twenty.

*For 'tis of a nature so subtil,  
That, if 'tis not Lusted with care  
The Spirit will work through the Bottel,  
And vanish away into Ayr.  
To keep it, there's nothing so hard is,  
'Twill go betwixt waking and sleeping,  
The Simple too weak for a guard is,  
And no Wit would be plagu'd with the keeping.*

*Vio.* For ought I see, you are as little to be trusted with your Madness, as I with my Simplicity; and therefore pray restore my Letter.

*Lau.* *reading it.* What's here? An humble Petition for a private Meeting? Are you twittering at that sport already, Mistress Novice?

*Vio.* How! I a Novice, at ripe Fifteen? I would have you to know, that I have kill'd my Man before I was Fourteen, and now am ready for another execution.

*Lau.* A very forward Rose-bud: you open apace, Gentlewoman, I find indeed your desires are quick enough; but where will you have cunning to carry on your business with decency and secrecy? Secrecy, I say, which is a main part of chastity in our Sex. Where  
wit,



wit, to be sensible of the delicacies of Love & the tenderness of a farewell-sigh? for an absence? the joy of a return? the zeal of a pressing-hand? the sweetness of little quarrels, caus'd, and cur'd, by the excess of Love? and, in short, the pleasing disquiets of the Soul, always restless, and wandering up and down in a paradise of thought, of its own making?

*Vio.* If I understood not thus much before, I find you are an excellent instructor, and that argues you have had a feeling of the cause in your time too, Sister.

*Law.* What have I confess'd before I was aware! She'll find out my inclination to that stranger, whom I have only seen, and to whom I have never spoken——*Aside.* No, good *Violetta*, I never was in Love; all my experience is from Playes and Romances: But who is this man, to whom you have promis'd an Assignment?

*Vio.* You'll tell my Uncle.

*Law.* I hate my Uncle more than you do.

*Vio.* You know the man, 'tis Signior *Camillo*: his Birth and Fortunes are equal to what I can expect; and he tells me his intentions are Honourable.

*Law.* Have I not seen him lately in his Balcone, which looks into our Garden, with another handsome Gentleman in his Company, who seems a stranger?

*Vio.* They are the same. Do you think it a reasonable thing, dear *Laura*, that my Uncle should keep us up so strictly, that we must be beholden to heresay, to know a young Gallant is in the next house to us?

*Law.* 'Tis hard, indeed, to be mew'd like Hawks, and never Man'd: to be lock'd in like Nuns here.

*Vio.* They that look for Nuns flesh in me shall be mistaken.

*Law.* Well, What answer have you return'd to this Letter?

*Vio.* That I would meet him at eight this evening, in the close walk in the Garden, attended onely by *Beatrice* my Woman.

*Law.* Who comes with him?

*Vio.* Only his friend's Man *Benito*; the same who brought me the Letter which you took from me.

*Law.* Stay, let me think a little. Do *Camillo*, or this *Benito*, know your Maid *Beatrix* ?

*Vio.* They have never talk'd with her ; but only seen her.

*Law.* 'Tis concluded then ; you shall meet your Servant, but I'll be your *Beatrix* : I'll go in stead of her, and counterfeit your waiting-woman : in the dark I may easily pass for her : By this means I shall be present to instruct you ; for you are yet a Callow Maid : I must teach you to Peck a little, you may come to Prey for your self in time.

*Vio.* A little teaching will serve my turn : if the old one left me to my self, I could go near to get my Living.

*Law.* I find you are eager, and Bating to be gone already, and I'll not hinder you when your hour approaches. In the mean time go in, and sigh, and think fondly, and ignorantly of your approaching pleasures :

Love, in young hearts, is like the must of Wine ;  
'Tis sweetest then, but elder 'tis more fine.

*Exunt.*

## ACT. II. SCENE I.

### *The Front of a Nunnery.*

*Prince Frederick, Aurelian, Camillo, and Ascanio  
the Princes Page.*

*Fred.* **M**Y Fathers' antient, and may repose himself, if he pleases, after the Ceremony of his Entrance ; but we, who are younger, should think it a sin, to spend any part of day-light in a Chamber. What are your wayes of living here ?

*Cam.*



*Cam.* Why Sir, we pass our time, either in conversation alone, or in Love alone, or in Love and Conversation together.

*Fred.* Come, explain, explain, my Counsel learned in the Laws of Living.

*Cam.* For conversation alone; that's either in going to Court, with a Face of Business, and there discoursing of the affairs of Europe, of which, Rome, you know, is the publick Mart; or, at best, meeting the *Vertuosi*, and there, wearying one another with rehearsing our own works, in Prose and Poetry.

*Fred.* Away with that dry method, I will have none on't. To the next.

*Cam.* Love alone, is either plain wenching, where every Curtizan is your Mistress, and every Man your Rival; or else, what's worse, plain whining after one Woman: that is, walking before her door by day, and haunting her street by night, with Guittars, dark Lanthorns, and Rondaches.

*Aur.* Which, I take it, is, or will be our case, *Camillo*.

*Fred.* Neither of these will fit my humour: if your third prove not more pleasant, I shall stick to the old *Almaine* recreation; the Divine bottel, and the bounteous glass, that tun'd up old *Horace* to his *Odes*.

*Aur.* You shall need to have no recourse to that; for Love, and Conversation will do your business: that is, Sir, a most delicious Curtizan, I do not mean down-right Punk, but Punk of more than ordinary sence in Conversation: Punk in Ragou, Punk who playes on the Lute, and Sings; and, to sum up all, Punk who Cooks and Dresses up her self, with Poynant Sawce, to become a new Dish every time she is serv'd up to you.

*Fred.* This I believe, *Aurelian*, is your method of living, you talk of it so favorily.

*Aur.* There is yet another more insipid sort of Love and Conversation: as for example, look you there, Sir; the { *Pointing to*  
Courtship of our Nuns. They talk prettily; but, a { *the Nunnery*  
Pox on'em, they raise our appetites, and then starve us. They are as dangerous as cold Fruits without Wine, and are never to be us'd but where there are abundance of Wenches in readines, to qualifie 'em.

*Cam.* But yet they are ever at hand, and easie to come by;

C

and

*The Assignment; or,*

and if you'll believe an experienc'd sinner, easiness in Love is more than half the pleasure of it.

*Fre.* This way of chatting pleases me; for debauchery, I hate it; and, to Love, is not in my nature, except it be my Friends. Pray, What do you call that Nunnery.

*Cam.* 'Tis a House of *Benedictines*, call'd the *Torre di Specchi*, where only Ladies of the best Quality are Profess'd.

*Lucretia and Hippolita appear at the Grates.*

*Aur.* Look you yonder, Sir, are two of the pretty Magpies, in white and black: if you will lull your self into a Platonick Dream you may: but, consider your sport will be but dull, when you play without Stakes.

*Fred.* No matter, I'll fool away an hour of Courtship; for I never yet was engag'd in a serious love, nor I believe can be. Farewell, Gentlemen; at this time I shall dispence with your attendance: nay, without Ceremony, because I would be incognito.

*Cam.* Come then, *Aurelian*, to our own affairs.

*Exeunt Aur. and Camillo.*

*The Prince and Ascanio approach.*

*Fred.* to *Lu.* For what Crime, fair Creature, were you condemn'd to this perpetual Prison?

*Luc.* For Chastity and Devotion, and two or three such melancholly virtues: they first brought me hither, and now must keep me company.

*Fred.* I should rather have guess'd it had been Murder, and that you are veil'd, for fear of doing more mischief with those Eyes: for, indeed, they are too sharp to be trusted out of the Scabbard.

*Luc.* Cease, I beseech you, to accuse my Eyes, till they have done some execution on your heart.

*Fred.* But I am out of reach, perhaps.

*Luc.* Trust not to that; they may shoot at a distance, though they cannot strike you near at hand.

*Fred.* But, if they should kill, you are ne'r the better: there's a Grate betwixt us, and you cannot fetch in the dead Quarry.

*Luc.* Provided we destroy the Enemy, we do not value their dead bodies: but you, perhaps, are in your first error, and think we are rather Captives than Warriours; that we come like Prisoners to the Grate, to beg the Charity of Passengers for their love.

*Fre.*

*Fre. to Ascanio.* Inquire as dexterously as you can, what is the Name and Quality of this Charming Creature.

*Luc. to Hip.* Be sure, if the Page approaches you, to get out of him his Masters Name. *The Prince and Lucretia seem to talk.*

*Hip. to Asca.* By that short whisper which I observ'd you took with your Master, I imagine, Mr. Page, you come to ask a certain question of me.

*Asca.* By this thy question, and by that whisper with thy Lady, (O thou Nymph of Devotion!) I find I am to impart a secret, and not to ask one: therefore, either confess thou art yet a meer Woman under that Veil, and by consequence most horribly inquisitive, or thou shalt lose thy longing, and know nothing of my Master.

*Hip.* By my Virginity, you shall tell first.

*Asca.* You'll break your Oath, on purpose to make the forfeit.

*Hip.* Your Master is call'd——

*Asca.* You Lady is Yclip'd——

*Hip.* For decency, in all matters of Love, the Man should offer first, you know.

*Asca.* That needs not, when the Damsel is so willing.

*Hip.* But I have sworn not to discover first, that her Name is Madam *Lucretia*; fair, as you see, to a Miracle, and of a most charming conversation; of Royal blood, and Niece to his Holiness; and, if she were not espous'd to Heaven, a Mistress for a Sovereign Prince.

*Asca.* After these Encomiums, 'twere vain for me to praise my Master: he is only poor Prince *Frederick*, otherwise call'd the Prince of *Mantua*; liberal, and valiant, discreet and handsome, and, in my simple judgment, a fitter Servant for your Lady, than his old Father, who is a Sovereign.

*Hip.* Dare you make all this good you have said of your Master?

*Asca.* Yes, and as much more of my self to you.

*Hip.* I defy you upon't, as my Lady's Second.

*Asca.* As my Masters, I accept it. The time?

*Hip.* Six this evening.

*Asca.* The place?

*Hip.* At this Grate.

*Asca.* The Weapons?

*The Affignation; or,*

*Hip.* Hands, and it may be Lips.

*Asca.* 'Tis enough: expect to hear from me.

*They withdraw and whisper to their Principals.*

*After the Whisper.*

*Fred. to Luc.* Madam, I am glad I know my enemy; for since it is impossible to see, and not admire you, the name of *Lucretia* is the best excuse for my defeat.

*Luc.* Persons, like Prince *Frederick*, ought not to assault Religious Houses; or to pursue Chastity and Virtue to their last retreat.

*Fred.* A Monastery is no retreat for Chastity; 'tis only a hiding place for bad faces, where they are thrust in Crowds together, like heaps of rubbish out of the way, that the world may not be peopled with deform'd persons, and that such who are out of Play themselves, may pray for a blessing on their endeavours, who are getting handsome Children: and carrying on the work for publick benefit.

*Luc.* Then you would put off Heaven with your leavings, and use it like them who play at Cards alone, take the Courts for your selves, and give the refuse to the Gentleman.

*Fred.* You mistake me, Madam; I would so contrive it, that Heaven and we might be serv'd at once: we have occasion for Wit and Beauty; now Piety and Ugliness will do as well for Heaven; that playes at one Game, and we at another, and therefore heaven may make its hand with the same Cards that we put out.

*Luc.* I could easily convince you if the argument concern'd me; but I am one of those, whom, for want of wit and beauty, you have condemn'd to Religion: and therefore am your humble Servant to Pray for your handsome Wife and Children.

*Fred.* Heaven forbid, Madam, that I should condemn you, or indeed any handsome woman, to be Religious. No, Madam; the occasions of the World are great and urgent for such as you: and, for my part, I am of opinion, that it is as great a Sin for a Beauty to enter into a Nunnery, as for an ugly woman to stay out of it.

*Luc.* The Cares of the World are not yet upon you; but as soon as ever you come to be afflicted with Sickness, or visited with a Wife, you'll be content I should pray for you.

*Fre*

*Frt.* Any where, rather than in a Cloyster; for, truly, I suppose, all your Prayers there will be how to get out of it; and, upon that supposition, Madam, I am come to offer you my service for your redemption. Come, faith, be perswaded, the Church shall lose nothing by it: I'll take you out, and put in two or three Crooked Apostles in your place.

*Bell rings within.*

*Luc.* Hark, the Bell rings, I must leave you: 'tis a summons to our Devotion.

*Fred.* Will you leave me for your Prayers, Madam? You may have enough of them at any time, but remember you cannot have a Man so easily.

*Luc.* Well, I'll say my Beads for you, and that's but Charity, for I believe I leave you in a most deplorable condition.

*Exeunt Women.*

*Fred.* Not deplorable neither, but a little altered: if I could be in Love, as I am sure I cannot, it should be with her, for I like her conversation strangely.

*Asca.* Then, as young as I am, Sir, I am before-hand with you; for I am in Love already. I would fain make the first proof of my Manhood upon a Nun: I find I have a mighty grudging to Holy Flesh.

*Fred.* I'll ply *Lucretia* again, as soon as ever her Devotion's over. Methinks these Nuns divide their time most admirably: from Love to Prayers; from Prayers to Love: that is, just so much Sin, just so much Godliness.

*Asca.* Then I can claim that Sister's Love by merit: Half Man, half Boy; for her half Flesh, half Spirit.

*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. A Street.

*Aurelian and Camillo.*

*Aur.* I'll proceed no farther, if *Benito* goes: I know his folly will produce some mischief.

*Cam.* But *Violetta* desir'd me, in her Note, to bring him, on purpose to pass the time with her Woman *Beatrice*.

*Aur.* That objection is easily remov'd: I'll supply *Benito's* place; the darkness will prevent discovery, and, for my discourse, I'll imitate  
the

the half Wit, and patch'd breeding of a *Valet de Chambre*.

*Cam.* But how shall we get rid of him?

*Aur.* Let me alone for that.

*Enter Benito:*

*Ben.* Come, Are we ready, Gallants? the Clock's upon the stroke of Eight.

*Aur.* But we have alter'd our resolution: we go another way to night.

*Ben.* I hope you have not broke my Affignation.

*Aur.* Why do you hope so?

*Ben.* Because my reputation is engag'd in't: I've stipulated upon my honour that you shall come.

*Aur.* I shall beat you if you follow me. Go, Sirrah, and adjourn to the great looking-glass, and let me hear no more from you till to morrow morning.

*Ben.* Sir, my fidelity, and, if I may be so vain, my discretion may stand you in some stead.

*Aur.* Well, come along then, they are brave Fellows who have challeng'd us, you shall have fighting enough, Sir.

*Ben.* How, Sir, Fighting?

*Aur.* You may scape with the loss of a Leg, or an arm, or some such transitory limb.

*Ben.* No, Sir; I have that absolute obedience to your commands, that I will bridle my courage, and stay at home. *Exit.*

*Cam.* You took the only way to be rid of him. There's the wall: behind yond pane of it we'll set up the Ladder. *Exeunt.*

### SCENE III. *A Night-piece of a Garden.*

*Enter Laura and Violetta.*

*Vio.* Remember your waiting-womans part, *Laura*.

*Lau.* I warrant you, I'll wait on you by night as well as I govern'd you by day.

*Vio.*



## Love in a Nunnery.

15

*Vio.* Hark, I hear foot-steps; and now, methinks, I see something approaching us.

*Law.* They are certainly the Men whom we expect.

*Enter Aurelian and Camillo.*

*Cam.* I hear Womens voices.

*Aur.* We are right, I warrant you.

*Cam.* *Violetta*, my Love!

*Vio.* My dear *Camillo*!

*Cam.* O speak those words again: my own name never founded so sweetly to me, as when you spoke it, and made me happy by adding Dear to it.

*Vio.* Speak softly then. I have stoln these few minutes from my watchful Uncle and my Sister, and they are as full of danger as they are of love. Something within me checks me too, and says, I was too forward in ventring thus to meet you.

*Cam.* You are too fearful rather, and fear's the greatest enemy to Love.

*Vio.* But night will hide my blushes, when I tell you I love you much, or I had never trusted my virtue and my person in your hands.

*Cam.* The one is sacred, and the other safe, but this auspicious minute is our first of near converse. May I not hope that favour, which strangers, in civility, may claim even from the most reserv'd?

[*Kisses her hand.*]

*Vio.* I fear you'll censure me.

*Cam.* Yes, as the blest above tax heaven for making them so happy.

[*They walk farther off.*]

*Aur.* *stepping towards Law.* Damsel of darkness, advance, and meet my flames.

*Law.* *stepping forward.* Right trusty Valet, heard, but yet unseen, I have advanced one step on reputation.

*Aur.* Now, by laudable custome, I am to love thee vehemently.

*Law.* We should do well to see each other first: You know 'tis ill taking Money without light.

*Aur.* O, but the coyn of Love is known by the weight only, and you

you may feel it in the dark : Besides, you know 'tis Prince-like to Love without seeing.

*Law.* But then you may be serv'd as Princes are sometimes.

*Aur.* Let us make haste however, and dispatch a little Love out of the way : we may do it now with ease, and save our selves a great deal of trouble, if we take it in time, before it grows too fast upon our hands.

*Law.* Fie, no ; let us Love discreetly, we must manage our passion, and not love all our love out at one meeting, but leave some for another time.

*Aur.* I am for applying the Plaister whilst the wound is green, 'twill heal the better. [Takes her by the hand.]

*Law.* Let go my hand : What crime has the poor wretch committed that you press it thus ? I remember no mischief it has done you.

*Aur.* O 'tis a hainous malefactor, and is press'd by Law, because it will confess nothing. Come, withdraw a little farther, we have urgent business with one another.

*Law.* 'Twere a shame to quit my ground upon the first charge ; yet if you please to take truce a little, I will consent to go behind the Lovers, and listen with you.

*Aur.* I wonder you defer'd the Proposition so long. I were neither true Valet, nor you true Woman if we could not Eves-drop.

*They retire behind the other two, who come forward upon the Stage.*

*Cam.* *kissing Violetta's hand.* Give me another yet, and then——

*Vio.* And then will you be satisfy'd ?

*Cam.* And then I'll ask a thousand more, and ne'r be satisfy'd. Kisses are but thin nourishment, they are too soon digested, and hungry Love craves more.

*Vio.* You feed a Wolf within you.

*Cam.* Then feast my Love with a more solid dyet. He makes us now a Misers Feast, and we forbear to take our fill. The silent night, and all these downy hours were made for Lovers : Gently they tread, and softly measure time, that no rude noise may fright the tender Maid, from giving all her soul to melting joys.

*Vio.* You do not love me ; if you did, you would not Thus urge your satisfaction in my shame ;  
At best, I see you would not love me long,



For they who plunder do not mean to stay.

*Cam.* I haste to take possession of my own.

*Vio.* E're Heaven and holy vows have made it so?

*Cam.* Then witness Heaven, and all these twinkling Stars——

*Vio.* Hold, hold; you are distemper'd with your love:  
Time, place, and strong desires now swear, not you.

*Cam.* Is not Love love without a Priest and Altars?  
The Temples are inanimate, and know not  
What Vows are made in them; the Priest stands ready  
For his hire, and cares not what hearts he couples,  
Love alone is marriage.

*Vio.* I never will receive these Mid-night Vows;  
But when I come hereafter to your Arms,  
I'll bring you a sincere, full, perfect bliss,  
Then you will thank me that I kept it so,  
And trust my faith hereafter.

*Lau.* There's your destiny, Lover mine: I am to be honest by infection; my Lady will none you see.

*Aur.* Truth is, they are a lost couple, unless they learn grace by our example. Come, shall we begin first, and shame them both? *Takes her by*

*Lau.* You'll never be warn'd of this hand, *Benito*, *{the hand again.*

*Aur.* Oh, 'tis so soft, as it were made on purpose to take hearts, and handle them without hurting. These Taper fingers too, and even joynts, so supple, that methinks I mould 'em as they pass through mine: nay, in my conscience, th' it be nonsense to say it, your hand feels white too.

*Lau.* Methinks yours is not very hard, for a Serving-mans: but where, in the name of wonder, have you learn'd to talk so courtly? you are a strange *Valet de Chambre*.

*Aur.* And you are as strange a Waiting-woman: you have so stab'd me with your Repartees to night, that I should be glad to change the weapon to be reveng'd on you.

*Lau.* These, I suppose, are fragments which you learn'd from your wild Master *Aurelian*: many a poor woman has pass'd through his hands, with these very words. You treat me just like a Serving-man, with the cold Meat which comes from your Masters Table.

*Aur.* You could never have suspected me for using my Masters wit, if you had not been guilty of purloining from your Lady. I am

D

told,

told, that *Laura*, your Mistress's Sister, has wit enough to confound a hundred *Anrelians*.

*Lau.* I shall do your commendations to *Laura* for your complement.

*Anr.* And I shall not fail to revenge my self by informing *Anrelian* of yours.

*Enter Benito with a Guittar.*

*Ben.* The poor souls shall not lose by the bargain, though my foolish gadding Masters have disappointed them. That Ladder of ropes was doubtless left there by the young Lady in hope of them.

*Vio.* Hark, I hear a noise in the Garden.

*Lau.* I fear we are betray'd.

*Cam.* Fear nothing, Madam, but stand close.

*Ben.* Now, *Benito*, is the time to hold forth thy tallent, and to set up for thy self. Yes, Ladies, you shall be Serenaded, and when I have display'd my gifts, I'll retire in Triumph over the Wall, and hug my self for the adventure. *[He fums on the Guittar.]*

*Vio.* Let us make haste, Sister, and get into Covert, this Musick will raise the House upon us immediately.

*Lau.* Alas, we cannot, the damn'd Musician stands just in the door where we should pass.

*Ben. Singing.* *Eveillez vous, Belles endormies ;  
Eveillez vous : car il est jour :  
Mettez la tete a la fenestre  
Vous entendrez parler d'amour.*

*Anr. aside to Cam.* *Camillo*, this is my incorrigible rogue ; and I dare not call him *Benito*, for fear of discovering my self not to be *Benito*.

*Cam.* The alarm's already given through the house. Ladies, you must be quick : secure your selves, and leave us to shift.

*[Exeunt Women.]*

*Within.* This way, this way.

*Anr.* I hear'em coming ; and, as ill luck will have it, just by that quarter where our Ladder is plac'd.

*Cap.*

*Cam.* Let us hide in the dark walk till they are past.

*Aur.* But then *Benito* will be caught, and being known to be my man, will betray us.

*Ben.* I hear some in the Garden: Sure they are the Ladies, that are taken with my melody. To't again *Benito*; this time I will absolutely enchant 'em. [Funs again.

*Aur.* He's at it again. Why *Benito*, Are you mad?

*Ben.* Ah, Madam! Are you there? this is such a favour to your poor unworthy Servant. [Sings.

*But still between kissing Amintas did say,  
Fair Phillis look up, and you'll turn night to day.*

*Aur.* Come away, you unsufferable rascal, the House is up, and will be upon us immediately.

*Ben.* O Gemini, Is it you, Sir?

*Within.* This way, follow, follow.

*Aur.* Leave your scraping and croaking, and step with us into this Arbor.

*Ben.* Scraping and Croaking! 'Sfoot, Sir, either grant I sing and play to a Miracle, or I'll justify my Musick, though I am caught, and hang'd for't.

*Enter Mario and Servants.*

*Mar.* Where is this Serenading Rascall? If I find him, I'll make him an example to all midnight Caterwaulers, of which this Fidler is the lewdest.

*Ben.* O that I durst but Play my Tune out to convince him! Soul of harmony! Is this lewd?

*Plays and Sings softly.*

*Cam.* Peace, dear *Benito*: We must flatter him.

*Ben.* *Singing softly.* Mettez la tête: the Notes which follow are so sweet, Sir, I must sing 'em, though it be my ruin——*Parler d'amour.*

*Laura and Violetta in the Balcone.*

*The Assignment; or,*

*Law.* Yes, we are safe, Sister; but they are yet in danger.

*Vio.* They are just upon 'em:

*Law.* We must do something: Help, help; Thieves, thieves; we shall be murder'd.

*Mar.* Where? Where are they?

*Law.* Here, Sir, at our Chamber door, and we are run into the Balcone for shelter: Dear Uncle, come and help us.

*Mar.* Back again quickly: I durst have sworn they had been in the Garden. 'Tis an *Ignis fatuus* I think that leads us from one place to another. [*Exeunt Mar. and Servants.*]

*Vio.* They are gone. My dear *Camillo*, make haste, and preserve your self.

*Cam.* May our next Meeting prove more propitious.

*Aur. to Benito.* Come, Sirrah, I shall make you sing another note when you are at home.

*Ben.* Such another word, and I'll sing again.

*Aur.* Set the Ladder, and mount first, you Rogue:

*Ben.* Mount first your self, and fear not my delaying: If I am caught, they'll spare me for my playing.

[*Sings as he goes off.*]

*Vous entendrez parler d'amour.*

*Exeunt omnes.*

## ACT. III. SCENE I.

*The Front of the Nunnery.*

*Ascanio, and Hippolita at the Grate.*

*Hip.* I See you have kept touch, Brother,

*Asca.* As a man of honour ought, Sister, when he is challeng'd: and now, according to the Laws of Duel, the next thing is to strip, and, in stead of seconds, to search one another.

*Hip.* We'll strip our hands, if you please, Brother; for they are the only weapons we must use.

*Asca.*

*Asca.* That were to invite me to my loss, Sister; I could have made a full meal in the World, and you would have me take up with hungry commons in the Cloyster. Pray mend my fare, or I am gone.

*Hip.* O, Brother, a hand in a Cloyster, is fare like flesh in *Spain*, 'tis delicate, because 'tis scarce. You may be satisfy'd with a hand, as well as I am pleas'd with the Courtship of a Boy.

*Asca.* You may begin with me Sister, as *Milo* did, by carrying a Calfe first, you may learn to carry an Oxe hereafter: In the mean time produce your hand, I understand Nuns-flesh better than you imagine: give it me, you shall see how I will worry it.

[*She gives her hand.*]

Now Could not we thrust out our lips, and contrive a Kiss too?

*Hip.* Yes, we may; but I have had the experience of it: it will be but half flesh, half Iron.

*Asca.* Let's try however.

*Hip.* Hold, *Lucretia* is here.

*Asca.* Nay, if you come with odds upon me, 'tis time to call Seconds,  
*Ascanio Hems.*

*The Prince and Lucretia appear.*

*Luc.* Sir, though your Song was pleasant, yet there was one thing amiss in it, that was your Rallying of Religion.

*Fred.* Do you speak well of my Friend Love, and I'll try to speak well of your friend Devotion.

*Luc.* I can never speak well of Love: 'twas to avoid it that I entered here.

*Fred.* Then, Madam, you have met your Man: for, to confess the truth to you, I have but counterfeited Love to try you; for I never yet could love any Woman: and, since I have seen you, and do not, I am certain now I shall scape for ever.

*Luc.* You are the best man in the World, if you continue this resolution: Pray, then, let us vow solemnly these two things: the first, to esteem each other better than we do all the world besides; the next, never to change our amity to love.

*Fre.* Agreed Madam: shall I kiss your hand on't?

*Luc.*

*Luc.* That's too like a Lover: or, if it were not, the narrowness of the Grate will excuse the ceremony.

*Hip.* No, but it will not, to my knowledge: I have try'd every bar many a fair time over, and, at last, have found out one where a hand may get through, and be gallanted.

*Luc.* *giving her hand.* There, Sir; 'tis a true one.

*Fre.* *kissing it.* This, then, is a Seal to our perpetual friendship; and a defiance to all Love.

*Luc.* That seducer of virtue.

*Fre.* That disturber of quiet.

*Luc.* That madness of youth.

*Fre.* That dotage of old age.

*Luc.* That enemy to good humour.

*Fre.* And, to conclude all, that reason of all unreasonable actions

*Asca.* This Doctrine is abominable, do not believe it Sister.

*Hip.* No, if I do, Brother, may I never have comfort from sweet youth at my extremity.

*Luc.* But remember one article of our friendship, that though we banish Love, we do not Mirth, nor Gallantry; for I declare, I am for all extravagancies, but just loving.

*Fre.* Just my own humour; for I hate gravity and melancholy next to love.

*Asca.* Now it comes into my head, the Duke of *Mantova* makes an entertainment to night in Masquerade: if you love extravagancy so well, Madam, I'll put you into the head of one; lay by your Nun-ship for an hour or two, and come amongst us in disguise.

*Fre.* My Boy is in the right, Madam. Will you venture? I'll furnish you with Masking-habits.

*Hip.* O my dear Sister, never refuse it: I keep the Keyes you know, I'll warrant you we'll return before we are miss'd. I do so long to have one fling into the sweet World again before I die. Hang't, at worst, 'tis but one sin more, and then we'll repent for all together.

*Asca.* But if I catch you in the World, Sister, I'll make you



you have a better opinion of the Flesh and the Devil for ever after.

*Luc.* If it were known, I were lost for ever.

*Fre.* How should it be known? you have her on your side, there; that keeps the Keyes: and, put the worst, that you are taken in the World; the World's a good World to stay in; and there are certain occasions of waking in a morning, that may be more pleasant to you than your *Matins*.

*Luc.* Fie, Friend, these extravagancies are a breach of Articles in our Friendship: but well, for once, I'll venture to go out; Dancing and Singing are but petty transgressions.

*Asca.* My Lord, here's company approaching: we shall be discover'd.

*Fred.* Adieu then, *jusqu'a revoir*; *Ascanio* shall be with you immediately, to conduct you.

*Asca.* How, Will you disguise, Sister? Will you be a Man, or a Woman?

*Hip.* A Woman, Brother *Page*, for life: I should have the strangest thoughts if I once wore Breeches.

*Asca.* A Woman, say you? Here's my hand, if I meet you in place convenient, I'll do my best to make you one. [Exit.

Enter Aurelian and Camillo.

*Cam.* But, Why thus melancholy, with Hat pull'd down, and the hand on the Region of the Heart, just the reverse of my Friend *Aurelian*, of happy memory?

*Aur.* Faith, *Camillo*, I am asham'd on't, but cannot help it.

*Cam.* But to be in Love with a Waiting-woman! with an eater of Fragments, a Simperer at lower end of a Table, with mighty Golls, rough-grain'd, and red with Starching, those discouragers and abettors of elevated love!

*Aur.* I could Love Deformity it self, with that good humour. She who is arm'd with Gayety and Wit, needs no other Weapon to conquer me.

*Cam.* We Lovers are the great Creators of wit in our Mistresses. For *Beatrice*, she a meer utterer of Yes and No, and has no more Sense

Since than what will just dignifie her to be an arrant waiting-woman: that is, to lye for her Lady, and take your Money.

*Aur.* It may be then I found her in the exaltation of her wit; for, certainly, women have their good and ill dayes of talking, as they have of looking.

*Cam.* But, however, she has done you the courtisy to drive out *Laura*: and so one Poyson has expell'd the other.

*Aur.* Troth, not absolutely neither; for I dote on *Laura's* beauty, and on *Beatrix's* wit: I am wounded with a forked Arrow, which will not easily be got out.

*Cam.* Not to lose time in fruitless complaints, let us pursue our new contrivance, that you may see your two Mistresses, and I my one.

*Aur.* That will not now be difficult: this plot's so laid, that I defy the Devil to make it miss. The Woman of the house, by which they are to pass to Church, is brib'd; the Ladies are, by her, acquainted with the design; and we need only to be there before them, and expect the prey, which will undoubtedly fall into the net.

*Cam.* Your Man is made safe, I hope, from doing us any mischief.

*Aur.* He has dispos'd of himself, I thank him, for an hour or two: the Fop would make me believe that an unknown Lady is in love with him, and has made him an Affignation.

*Cam.* If he should succeed now, I should have the worse opinion of the Sex for his sake.

*Aur.* Never doubt but he'll succeed: your brisk Fool that can make a Leg, is ever a fine Gentleman among the Ladies, because he's just of their tallent, and they understand him better than a Wit.

*Cam.* Peace, the Ladies are coming this way to the Chappel, and their Jaylor with 'em: let 'em go by without saluting, to avoid suspicion; and let us go off to prepare our Engine.

*Enter*



*Enter Mario, Laura, and Violetta.*

*Aur.* I must have a look before we go. Ah, you little Divine rogue! I'll be with you immediately. [*Exeunt Aur. and Cam.*]

*Vio.* Look you, Sister, there are our Friends, but take no notice,

*Lau.* I saw them. Was not that *Aurelian* with *Camillo*?

*Vio.* Yes.

*Lau.* I like him strangely. If his person were joyn'd with *Benito's* Wit, I know not what would become of my poor heart.

*Enter Fabio, and whispers with Mario.*

*Mar.* Stay, Nieces, I'll but speak a word with *Fabio*, and go with you immediately.

*Vio.* I see, Sister, you are infinitely taken with *Benito's* wit; but I have heard he is a very conceited Coxcomb.

*Lau.* They who told you so, were horribly mistaken: you shall be judge your self, *Violetta*; for, to confess frankly to you, I have made him a kind of an appointment.

*Vio.* How! Have you made an Affignation to *Benito*? A Serving-man! a Trencher-carrying Rascal!

*Lau.* Good words, *Violetta*! I only sent to him from an unknown Lady near this Chappel, that I might view him in passing by, and see if his person were answerable to his conversation.

*Vio.* But how will you get rid of my Uncle?

*Lau.* You see my project; his man *Fabio* is brib'd by me, to hold him in discourse.

*Enter Benito, looking about him.*

*Vio.* In my conscience this is he. Lord, what a Monster of a Man is there! With such a VVorkiday-rough-hewn face too! for, faith, Heaven has not bestow'd the finishing upon't.

*Lau.* 'Tis impossible this should be *Benito*; yet he stalks this way: from such a piece of animated Timber, sweet Heaven deliver me.

E

*Benito*

*Benito aside.* This must of necessity be the Lady who is in Love with me. See, how she surveyes my Person! Certainly one VVit knows another by instinct. By that old Gentleman, it should be the Lady *Laura* too. Hum! *Benito*, thou art made for ever.

*Lau.* He has the most unpromising Face, for a VVit, I ever saw; and yet he had need have a very good one, to make amends for his face. I am half cur'd of him already.

*Ben.* VVhat means all this Surveying, Madam? you bristle up to me, and wheel about me, like a Turkey-cock that is making Love: Faith, How do you like my Person, ha?

*Lau.* I dare not praise it, for fear of the old Complement, that you should tell me, 'Tis at my service. But, pray, Is your Name *Benito*?

*Ben.* Signior *Benito*, at your service, Madam.

*Lau.* And have you no Brother, or any other of your Name, one that is a VVit, attending on Signior *Aurelian*?

*Ben.* No, I can assure your Ladiship: I my self am the only wit who does him the honour, not to attend him, but to bear him company.

*Lau.* But sure it was another you, that waited on *Camillo* in the Garden, last night.

*Ben.* It was no other Me, but me Signior *Benito*.

*Lau.* 'Tis impossible.

*Ben.* 'Tis most certain.

*Lau.* Then I would advise you to go thither again, and look for the wit which you have left there, for you have brought very little along with you: your voice, methinks, too, is much alter'd.

*Ben.* Only a little over-strain'd, or so, with Singing.

*Lau.* How slept you, after your adventure?

*Ben.* Faith, Lady, I could not sleep one wink, for Dreaming of you.

*Lau.* Not sleep for Dreaming! VVhen the place falls, you shall be Bull-master-General at Court.

*Ben.* Et tu Brute! Do you mistake me for a Fool too? then, I find there's one more of that opinion besides my Master.

*Vio.* Sister, look to your self, my Uncle's returning.

*Law.* I am glad on'ts he has done my business: he has absolutely cur'd me. Lord, that I could be so mistaken!

*Vio.* I told you what he was.

*Law.* He was quite another thing last night: never was Man so alter'd in four and twenty hours. A pure Clown, meer Elementary earth, without the least spark of Soul in him!

*Ben.* But, tell me truly, Are not you in Love with me? Confess the truth: I love plain-dealing: you shall not find me refractory.

*Law.* Away, thou Animal; I have found thee out for a high and mighty fool, and so I leave thee.

*Mar.* Come, now I am ready for you; as little Devotion, and as much good Huswifery as you please: take example by me; I assure you no body debauches me to Church, except it be in your Company. [Exeunt.]

Manet Benito!

*Ben.* I am undone for ever: What shall I do with my self? I'll run into some Desert, and there I'll hide my opprobrious head. No, hang't, I won't neither; all Wits have their failings sometimes, and have the fortune to be thought fools once in their lives. Sure this is but a copy of her countenance; for my heart's true to me, and whispers to me, she loves me still: well, I'll trust in my own merits, and be confident.

[A noise of throwing down water within.]

*Enter Mario, Fabio, Laura, and Violetta.*

*Law.* *Shaking her Cloaths,* Oh Sir, I am wet quite through my Cloaths, I am not able to endure it.

*Vio.* Was there ever such an insolence?

*Mar.* Send in to see who lives there: I'll make an example of em.

*Enter Frontona.**Fab.* Here's the Woman of the House her self, Sir.*Fron.* Sir, I submit, most willingly, to any punishment you shall inflict upon me; for, though I intended nothing of an affront to these sweet Ladies, yet I can never forgive my self the misfortune of which I was the innocent occasion.*Vio.* O I am ready to faint away.*Fron.* Alas, poor sweet Lady, she's young and tender, Sir: I beseech you, give me leave to repair my offence, with offering my self, and poor House, for her accommodation.*Ben.* I know that Woman: there's some villanous Plot in this, I'll lay my life on't. Now, *Benito*, cast about for thy credit, and recover all again.*Mar.* Go into the Coach, Neece, and bid the Coach-man drive apace. As for you, Mistress, your smooth Tongue shall not excuse you.*Law.* By your favour, Sir, I'll accept of the Gentlewoman's civility; I cannot stir a step farther.*Fro.* Come in, sweet Buds of Beauty, you shall have a Fire in an inner Chamber, and if you please to repose your self a while, Sir, in another Room, they shall come out, and wait on you immediately.*Mar.* Well, if it must be so.*Fron.* *whispering the Ladies.* Your Friends are ready in the Garden, and will be with you as soon as we have shaken off your Uncle.*Ben.* A Cheat, a cheat, a rank one; I smell it, old Sir, I smell it.*Mar.* What's the matter with the Fellow? Is he distracted?*Ben.* No, 'tis you are more likely to be distracted; but that there goes some wit to the being mad, and you have not the least grain of wit to be gull'd thus grossly.*Fron.* What does the fellow mean?*Ben.* The Fellow means to detect your villany, and to recover his lost reputation of a Wit.*Fron.*

*Fron.* Why, Friend, What villany? I hope my house is a civil house.

*Ben.* Yes, a very civil one; for my master lay in of his last Clap there, and was treated very civilly to my knowledge.

*Mar.* How's this, How's this?

*Fron.* Come, you are a dirty Fellow, and I am known to be a person that——

*Ben.* Yes, you are known to be a person that——

*Fron.* Speak your worst of me, What person am I known to be?

*Ben.* Why, if you will have it, you are a little better than a procurefs: you carry messages betwixt party and party, and, in one word Sir, she's as arrant a Fruit-woman as any is about Rome.

*Mar.* Nay, if she be a Fruit-woman, my Nieces shall not enter into her doors.

*Ben.* You had best let them enter, you do not know how they may fructify in her house, for I heard her with these Eares whisper to'm, that their Friends were within call.

*Mar.* This is palpable, this is manifest; I shall remember you, Lady Fruiterer, I shall have your baskets search'd when you bring Oranges again. Come away, Nieces; and thanks honest Fellow for thy discovery.

[*Exeunt Mario and VVomen.*]

*Ben.* *Hab contragio: Il Diavolo e morto.* Now I think I have tickled it; this discovery has re-instated me into the Empire of my wit again. Now, in the pomp of this atchievement, will I present my self before Madam *Laura*, with a Behold, Madam, the happy restoration of *Benito*.

*Enter Aurelian, Camillo, and Frontona, overhearing him.*

Oh, now, that I had the Mirrour, to behold my self in the fulness of my glory! and, oh, that the domineering Fop my Master were in presence, that I might triumph over him! that I might even contemn the wretched wight, the mortal of a groveling Sou!, and of a debased understanding.

*He*

*He looks about him and sees his Master.*

How the Devil came these three together? nothing vexes me but that I must stand bare to him, after such an enterprize as this is.

*Aur.* Nay, put on, put on again, sweet Sir; VVhy should you be uncover'd before the Fop your Master? the wretched wight, the mortal of a groveling Soul.

*Ben.* Ay, Sir, you may make bold with your self at your own pleasure: But for all that, a little bidding would make me take your Counsel and be cover'd, as Affairs go now.

*Aur.* If it be lawful for a man of a debased understanding to confer with such an exalted wit, pray what was that glorious achievement which rapt you into such an extasy?

*Ben.* 'Tis a sign you know well how matters go, by your asking me so impertinent a question.

*Aur.* *putting off his Hat to him.* Sir, I beg of you, as your most humble Master, to be satisfy'd.

*Ben.* Your Servant, Sir; at present I am not at leisure for conference. But hark you, Sir, by the way of friendly advice, one word, henceforward tell me no more of the adventure of the Garden, nor of the great Looking-glass——

*Aur.* You mean the Mirror.

*Ben.* Yes, the Mirror; tell me no more of that, except you could behold in it a better, a more discreet, or a more able face for stratagem, than I can, when I look there.

*Aur.* But, to the business; What is this famous enterprize?

*Ben.* Be satisfy'd, without troubling me farther, the business is done, the Rogues are defeated, and your Mistress is secur'd: if you would know more, demand it of that Criminal, [*Pointing to Frontona.*] and ask her how she dares appear before you, after such a signal treachery, or before me, after such an overthrow?

*Fron.* I know nothing, but only that, by your Masters Order, I was to receive the two Ladies into my house, and you prevented it.

*Ben.* By my Master's Order? I'll ne'r believe it. This is your stratagem, to free your self, and defraud me of my reward.

*Cam.*



*Cam.* I'll witness what she says is true.

*Ben.* I am deaf to all asseverations that make against my honour.

*Aur.* I'll swear it then. We two were the two Rogues, and you the discoverer of our Villany.

*Ben.* Then, woe, woe, to poor *Benito*! I find my abundance of wit has ruin'd me.

*Aur.* But come a little nearer: I would not receive a good office from a Servant, but I would reward him for his diligence.

*Ben.* Virtue, Sir, is its own reward: I expect none from you.

*Aur.* Since it is so, Sir, you shall lose no further time in my service: henceforward pray know me for your humble Servant; for your Master I am resolv'd to be no longer.

*Ben.* Nay, rather than so, Sir, I beseech you let a good honest sufficient beating atone the difference.

*Aur.* 'Tis in vain.

*Ben.* I am loath to leave you without a guide.

*Aur.* He's at it again, do you hear, *Camillo*?

*Cam.* Prethy, *Aurelian*, be mollify'd, and beat him.

*Prosp.* Pray, Sir, hear reason, and lay't on, for my sake.

*Aur.* I am obdurate.

*Cam.* But, What will your Father say, if you part with him?

*Aur.* I care not.

*Ben.* Well, Sir, since you are so peremptory, remember I have offer'd you satisfaction, and so long my conscience is at ease: what a Devil, before I'll offer my self twice to be beaten, by any Master in Christendome, I'll starve, and that's my resolution, and so your Servant that was Sir.

*Exit.*

*Aur.* I am glad I am rid of him; he was my Evil Genius, and was alwayes appearing to me, to blast my undertakings: Let me send him never so farr off, the Devil would be sure to put him in my way, when I had any thing to execute. Come, *Camillo*, now we have chang'd the Dice, it may be we shall have better fortune.

SCENE



## SCENE. II.

*Enter the Duke of Mantoua in Masquerade, Frederick, Valerio, and others. On the other side Enter Lucretia, Hippolita, and Ascanio.*

*Luc. to Asca.* The Prince I know already, by your description of his Masking-habit; but, Which is the Duke his Father?

*Asca.* He whom you see talking with the Prince, and looking this way. I believe he has observ'd us.

*Luc.* If he has not, I am resolv'd we'll make our selves as remarkable as we can: I'll exercise my talent of Dancing.

*Hip.* And I mine of Singing.

*Duke to Frederick.* Do you know the Company which came in last?

*Fred.* I cannot possibly imagine who they are: at least I will not tell you ——— *Aside.*

*Duke.* There's something very uncommon in the Ayre of one of them.

*Fred.* Please you, Sir, I'll discourse with her, and see if I can satisfie your Highness.

*Duke.* Stay, there's a Dance beginning, and she seems as if she wou'd make one.

## SONG and DANCE.

*Long betwixt Love and fear Phillis tormented,  
Shun'd her own wish yet at last she consented:  
But loath that day shou'd her blushes discover,  
Come gentle Night she said,  
Come quickly to my aid,  
And a poor Shamefac'd Maid  
Hide from her Lover.*

*Now*

Now cold as Ice I am, now hot as Fire,  
I dare not tell my self my own desire,  
But let Day fly away, and let Night hast her:  
Grant yee kind Powers above,  
Slow houres to parting Love,  
But when to Bliss we move,  
Bid 'em fly faster.

How sweet it is to Love when I discover,  
That Fire which burns my Heart, warming my Lover;  
'Tis pitty Love so true should be mistaken:  
But if this Night he be  
False or unkinde to me,  
Let me dye ere I see  
That I'm forsaken.

*After the Dance.* My curiosity redoubles, I must needs hale that unknown Vessel, and enquire whither she's bound, and what freight she carries.

*Fred.* She's not worth your trouble, Sir: she'll either prove some common Courtizan in disguise, or at best, some homely person of Honour, that only dances well enough to invite a fight of her self, and would look ill enough to fright you.

*Duke.* That's maliciously said; all I see of her is charming, and I have reason to think her face is of the same piece, at least I'll try my fortune.

*Fred.* What an unlucky accident is this! If my father should discover her, she's ruin'd: if he does not, yet I have lost her conversation to night,

*Duke approaches Lucretia.*

*Asca.* 'Tis the Duke himself who comes to court you.

*Luc.* Peace, I'll fit him; for I have been inform'd to the least tittle of his actions since he came to Town.

F

*Duke*

*Duke to Lucretia.* Madam, the Duke of *Mantona*, whom you must needs imagine to be in this company, has sent me to you, to know what kind of face there is belonging to that excellent shape, and to those charming motions which he observ'd so lately in your Dancing.

*Luc.* Tell his Highness, if you please, that there is a Face within the Masque, so very deform'd, that if it were discover'd, it would prove the worst Vizard of the two ; and that, of all Men, he ought not to desire it should be expos'd, because then something would be found amiss in an entertainment which he has made so splendid and magnificent.

*Duke.* The Duke I am sure would be very proud of your complement, but it would leave him more unsatisfy'd than before, for he will find in it so much of Gallantry, as, being added to your other graces, will move him to a strange temptation of knowing you.

*Luc.* I should still have the more reason to refuse him ; for 'twere a madness, when I had charm'd him by my motion and converse, to hazard the loss of that conquest by my eyes.

*Duke aside.* I am on fire till I discover her.  
At least, Madam, tell me of what Family you are.

*Luc.* Will you be satisfy'd if I tell you I am of the *Colonne* ; you have seen *Julia* of that House.

*Duke.* Then you are she.

*Luc.* Have I not her Stature most exactly ?

*Duke.* As near as I remember.

*Luc.* But, by your favour, I have nothing of her shape ; for, if I may be so vain to praise my self, she's a little thicker in the shoulders, and, besides, she moves ungracefully.

*Duke.* Then you are not she again.

*Luc.* No not she : but you have forgotten *Emilia* of the *Ursini*, whom the Duke saluted yesterday at her Balcone, when he enter'd. Her Ayre and Motion

*Duke.* Are the very same with yours. Now I am sure I know you.

*Luc.* But there's too little of her to make a Beauty : my stature is much more advantageous.

*Duke.* You have cozen'd me again.

*Luc.*

*Luc.* Well, I find at last I must confess my self. What think you of *Engenia Beata*? the Duke seem'd to be infinitely pleas'd last night, when my Brother presented me to him at the *Belvedere*.

*Duke.* Now I am certain you are she; for you have both her stature, and her motion.

*Luc.* But, if you remember your self a little better, there's some small difference in our wit: for she has indeed the Ayre and Beauty of a Roman Lady, but all the dulness of a Dutch-woman.

*Duke.* I see, Madam, you are resolv'd to conceal your self, and I am as fully resolv'd to know you.

*Luc.* See which of our resolutions will take place.

*Duke.* I come from the Duke, and can assure you he is of an humour to be obey'd.

*Luc.* And I am of an humour not to obey him. But, Why should he be so curious?

*Duke.* If you would have my opinion, I believe he is in love with you.

*Luc.* Without seeing me?

*Duke.* Without feeling all of you: Love is love, let it wound us from what part it please; and if he have enough from your shape and conversation, his business is done, the more compendiously, without the face.

*Luc.* But the Duke cannot be taken with my conversation, for he never heard me speak.

*Duke aside.* 'Slife, I shall discover my self. Yes, Madam, he stood by, incognito, and heard me speak with you: but ———

*Luc.* I wish he had trusted to his own courtship, and spoke himself; for it gives us a bad impression of a Princes wit, when we see fools in favour about his person.

*Duke.* What ever I am, I have it in Commission from him to tell you, He's in Love with you.

*Luc.* The good old Gentleman may dote, if he so pleases; but love, and fifty years old, are stark non-sense.

*Duke.* But some men, you know, are green at fifty.

*Luc.* Yes, in their understandings.

*Duke.* You speak with great contempt of a Prince, who has some reputation in the world.

*Luc.* No; 'tis you that speak with contempt of him, by saying he is in love at such an Age.

*Duke.* Then, Madam, 'tis necessary you should know him better for his reputation: and, that shall be, though he violate the Laws of Masquerade, and force you.

*Fred.* I suspected this, from his violent temper. [*Aside.* Sir, the Emperour's Ambassador is here, in Masquerade, and I believe this to be his Lady: it were well if you inquir'd of him, before you forc'd her to discover.

*Duke.* Which is the Ambassador?

*Fred.* That farthermost. [*Duke retires farther.*

*Fred. to Luc.* Take your opportunity to escape, while his back is turn'd, or you are ruin'd. *Ascanio*, wait on her.

*Luc.* I am so frighted, I cannot stay to thank you.

[*Exeunt Luc, Asca, and Hippolita.*

*Duke to Fred.* 'Tis a mistake, the Ambassador knows nothing of her: I'm resolv'd I'll know it of her self, ere she shall depart. Ha! Where is she? I left her here.

*Fred. aside.* Out of your reach, Father mine, I hope.

*Duke.* She has either shifted places, or else slip't out of the Assembly.

*Fred.* I have look'd round: she must be gone, Sir.

*Duke.* She must not be gone, Sir. Search for her every where: I will have her.

*Fred.* Has she offended your Highness?

*Duke.* Peace, with your impertinent questions. Come hither, *Valerio*.

*Valerio.* Sir?

*Duke.* O, *Valerio*, I am desperately in love: that Lady, with whom you saw me talking, has—— But I lose time; she's gone; haste after her; find her; bring her back to me.

*Val.* If it be possible.

*Duke.* It must be possible; the quiet of my life depends upon it.

*Val.* Which way took she?

*Duke.* Go any way, every way; ask no questions: I know no more, but that she must must be had.

*Exit Valerio.*

*Fred.* Sir, the assembly will observe, that——

*Duke:*

## Love in a Nunnery.

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*Duke.* Damn the assembly, 'tis a dull insignificant crowd, now she is not here: break it up, I'll stay no longer.

*Fred. aside.* I hope she's safe, and then this fantastick love of my Fathers will make us sport too morrow.

*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III.

Lucretia, Ascanio, Hippolita.

*Luc.* Now, that we are safe at the gate of our Covent, methinks the adventure was not unpleasant.

*Hip.* And now that I am out of danger, Brother, I may tell you what a Novice you are in love, to tempt a young Sister into the wide World, and not to show her the difference betwixt that and her Cloyster: I find I may venture safely with you another time.

*Asca.* O, Sister, you play the Brazen-head with me; you give me warning when Time's past: but that was no fit opportunity: I hate to snatch a morsel of Love, and so away; I am for a set-meal, where I may enjoy my full gust; but when I once fall on, you shall find me a brave man upon occasion.

*Luc.* 'Tis time we were in our Cells. Quick, *Hippolita*, where's the Key?

*Hip.* Here, in my pocket — — — No, 'tis in my other Pocket — — — Ha — — — 'tis not there, neither. I am sure I put it in one of them.

*Luc.* What should we do, if it should be lost now?

*Hip.* I have search'd my self all over, and cannot find it.

*Asca.* A woman can never search her self all over; let me search you, Sister.

*Luc.* Is this a time for Raillery? Oh, sweet heaven! speak comfort quickly; Have you found it?

*Here Ascanio slips away.*

*[Exit.]*

*Hip.* Speak you comfort, Madam, and tell me you have it, for I am too sure that I have none on't.

*Luc.* O unfortunate that we are! day's breaking; the handy-crafts shops begin to open.

*Clock strikes.*

*Hip.*



*Hip.* The Clock strikes two: within this half hour we shall be call'd up to our Devotions. Now, good *Ascanio*——Alas! he's gone too! we are left miserable, and forlorn.

*Luc.* We have not so much as one place in the Town for a Retreat.

*Hip.* O, for a Miracle in our time of need! that some kind good-natur'd Saint would take us up, and heave us over the Wall into our Cells.

*Luc.* Dear Sister, Pray; for I cannot: I have been so sinful, in leaving my Cloyster for the World, that I am ashamed to trouble my Friends above to help me.

*Hip.* Alas, Sister, with what face can I Pray, then! Yours were but little vanities; but I have sin'd swingingly, against my Vow; yes, indeed, Sister, I have been very wicked; for I wish'd the Ball might be kept perpetually in our Cloyster, and that half the handsome Nuns in it might be turn'd to Men, for the sake of the other.

*Luc.* Well, if I were free from this disgrace, I would never more set foot beyond the Cloyster, for the sake of any Man.

*Hip.* And here I Vow, if I get safe within my Cell, I will not think of Man again these seven years.

*Ascanio Re-enters.*

*Asca.* Hold, *Hippolita*, and make no more rash Vows: if you do, as I live, you shall not have the Key.

*Hip.* The Key! why, Have it you, Brother?

*Luc.* He does but mock us: I know you have it not, *Ascanio*.

*Asca.* *Ecce signum*; Here it is for you.

*Hip.* O, sweet Brother, let me kiss you.

*Asca.* Hands off, sweet Sister; you must not be forsworn: you vow'd you would not think of a man these seven years.

*Hip.* Ay, Brother, but I was not so hasty, but I had wit enough to cozen the Saint to whom I vow'd; for you are but a Boy, Brother, and will not be a Man these seven years.

*Luc.* But, Where did you find the Key, *Ascanio*?

*Asca.*



*Asca.* To confess the truth, Madam, I stole it out of *Hippolita's* Pocket, to take the Print of it in Wax; for, I'll suppose, you'll give my Master leave to wait on you in the Nunnery-garden, after your Abbess has walk'd the Rounds.

*Luc.* Well, well, good morrow: when you have slept, come to the Grate for a Letter to your Lord. Now will I have the head-ach, or the Meagrim, or some excuse, for I am resolv'd I'll not rise to Prayers.

*Hip.* Pray, Brother, take care of our Masking-habits, that they may be forth-coming another time.

*Asca.* Sleep, sleep, and dream of me, Sister: I'll make it good, if you dream not too unreasonably.

*Luc.* Thus dangers in our Love make joyes more dear;  
And Pleasure's sweetest, when 'tis mixt with fear. [Exeunt.]

ACT. IV. SCENE I.

*A Dressing-Chamber.*

*The Masking-habits of Lucretia and Hippolita  
laid in a Chair.*

*Fred. and Ascanio*

*Fred.* **I** Never thought I should have lov'd her. B't come to this, after all my boastings and declarations against it? Sure I lov'd her before, and did not know it, till I fear'd to lose her: there's the reason. I had never desir'd her, if my Father had not. This is just the longing of a Woman: she never finds the appetite in her self, till she sees the Meat on anothers Plate. I'm glad however, you took the impression of the Key; but 'twas not well to fright them.

*Asca.* Sir, I could not help it; but here's the effect on't: the Workman sat up all night to make it.

*Gives a Key.  
Fred.*

*Fred.* This Key will admit me into the *seraglio* of the Godly. The Monastery has begun the War, in Sallying out upon the World, and therefore 'tis but just that the World should make Reprizals on the Monastery.

*Asca.* Alas, Sir, you and *Lucretia* do but skirmish, 'tis I and *Hippolita* that make the War: 'tis true, opportunity has been wanting for a Battel, but the forces have been stoutly drawn up on both sides. As for your concernment, I come just now from the Monastery, and have Orders from your Platonick Mistris to tell you, she expects you this evening in the Garden of the Nunnery; withall, she deliver'd me this Letter for you.

*Fred.* Give it me,

*Asca.* O, Sir, the Duke your Father!

*The prince takes the Letter, and thinking to put it up hastily, drops it.*

*Enter Duke.*

*Duke.* Now, *Frederick*! not abroad yet?

*Fred.* Your last nights entertainment left me so weary, Sir, that I over-slept my self this morning.

*Duke.* I rather envy you, than blame you: our sleep is certainly the most pleasant portion of our lives. For my own part, I spent the night waking, and restless.

*Fred.* Has any thing of moment happen'd to discompose your Highness?

*Duke.* I'll confess my follies to you: I am in love with a Lady I saw last night in Masquerade.

*Fred.* 'Tis strange she should conceal her self.

*Duke.* She has, from my best search; yet I took exact notice of her Masking habit, and describ'd it to those whom I employ'd to find her.

*Fred. aside.* 'Sdeath, it lies there unremov'd; and, if he turns himself, full in his eye. Now, now 'twill be discover'd.

*Duke.* For 'twas extreamly remarkable. I remember very well 'twas a loose long Robe, streak'd black and white, girt with a large Silver Ribband, and the Vizer was a Moor's Face.

*Fred.*

*Fred. Running to the Chair where the Habits are, sits down.*

Sir, I beg pardon of your Highness for this Rudeness, I am——  
O, Oh——

*Duke.* What's the Matter?

*Fred.* I am taken so extremely ill o'the sudden, that I am forc'd to sit before you.

*Duke.* Alas, What's your distemper?

*Fred.* A most violent griping, which pulls me together on a heap.

*Duke.* Some cold, I fear, you took last night. [*Runs to the Door.* Who waits there? Call Physicians to the Prince.

*Fred.* *Ascanio*, remove these quickly.

*Ascanio takes away the habits, and Exit.*

*Duke returning.* How do you find your self?

*Fred. arising.* Much better, Sir: that which pain'd me is remov'd: as it came unexpectedly, so it went as suddenly.

*Enter Valerio.*

*Duke.* The Ayre, perhaps, will do you good. If you have health, you may see those Troops drawn out, which I design for *Mil-lan*.

*Fred.* Shall I wait your Highness?

*Duke.* No, leave me here with *Valerio*; I have a little business, which dispatch'd, I'll follow you immediately.

Well, What success, *Valerio*?

[*Exit Frederick.*]

*Val.* Our indeavours are in vain, Sir: there has been inquiry made about all the Pallaces in *Rome*, and neither of the Masking-habits can be discover'd.

*Duke.* Yet, it must be a Woman of Quality. What Paper's that at my foot?

*Val. taking up the Letter.* 'Tis Seal'd, Sir, and directed to the Prince.

*Duke, taking the Letter.* 'Tis a Womans hand. Has he got a Mistress in Town so soon? I am resolv'd to open it, though I do not approve my own curiosity.

*Opens and Reads it.*

G

*Now*

*Now my fear is over, I can laugh at my last night's adventure: I find that at Fifty all Men grow incorrigible, and Lovers especially; for, certainly, never any Creature could be worse treated than your Father, (How's this, Valerio? I am amaz'd) and yet the good, old, out of fashion Gentleman heard himself Raillied, and bore it with all the patience of a Christian Prince. (Now 'tis plain, the Lady in Masquerade is a Mistress of my Son's, and the undutiful wretch was in the Plot to abuse me.) Alcanio will tell you the latter part of our misfortune, how hard'y we got into the Cloyster, (A Nun too! Oh, the Devil!) when we meet next, pray provide to laugh heartily, for there is subject sufficient for a plentiful fit, and soper enough to spare for another time.*

*Lucretia,*

*Val. Lucretia! now the Mystery is unfolded.*

*Duke. Do you know her?*

*Val. When I was last at Rome, I saw her often; she is near Kinswoman to the present Pope; and, before he placed her in this Nunnery of Benedictines, was the most celebrated Beauty of the Town.*

*Duke. I know I ought to hate this Woman, because she has affronted me thus grossly; but yet I cannot help it, I must love her.*

*Val. But, Sir, you come on too much disadvantage to be your Son's Rival.*

*Duke. I am deaf to all considerations: prythee do not think of giving a Mad-man Counsel: pry me, and cure me, if thou canst; but remember there's but one infallible Medicine, that's enjoyment.*

*Val. I had forgot to tell you, Sir, that the Governour Don Mario is without, to wait on you.*

*Duke. Desire him to come in.*

*Enter Don Mario.*

*Mario. I am come, Sir, to beg a favour from your Highness, and 'tis on the behalf of my Sister Sophronia, Abbess of the Terr'di Specchi.*

*Val,*

## Love in a Nunnery.

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*Val.* Sir, she's Abbess of that very Monastery where your Mistress is inclos'd. *[Aside, to the Duke.]*

*Duke.* I should be glad to serve any Relation of yours, Don *Mar-*  
*rio.*

*Mar.* Her request is, That you would be pleas'd to grace her Chappel this afternoon. There will be Musick, and some little Ceremony, in the Reception of my two Nieces, who are to be plac'd in Pension there.

*Duke.* Your Nieces, I hear, are fair, and great Fortunes.

*Mar.* Great vexations I'm sure they are; being daily haunted by a company of wild Fellows, who buz about my house like Flies.

*Duke.* Your design seems reasonable; Women in hot Countreys are like Oranges in cold: to preserve them, they must be perpetually hous'd. I'll bear you company to the Monastery. Come, *Valerio*; this opportunity is happy beyond our expectation. *[Exeunt]*

## SCENE II.

*Camillo, Aurelian.*

*Cam.* He has smarted sufficiently for this offence: pr'ythee, dear *Aurelian*, forgive him; he waits without, and appears penitent; I'll be responsible for his future carriage.

*Aur.* For your sake, then, I receive him into grace.

*Cam. at the door.* *Benito*, you may appear, your peace is made.

*Enter Benito.*

*Aur.* But, it must be upon conditions.

*Ben.* Any conditions that are reasonable; for, as I am a Wit, Sir, I have not eaten——

*Aur.* You are in the path of perdition already; that's the principal of our Conditions, you are to be a Wit no more.

*Ben.* Pray, Sir, if it be possible, let me be a little Wit still.

*Aur.* No, Sir: you can make a Leg, and Dance; those are no Talents of a Wit: you are cut out for a brisk fool, and can be no other.

G 2

*Ben.*

*Ben.* Pray, Sir, let me think <sup>am</sup> Wit, or my heart will break.

*Cam.* That you will naturally do, as you are a Fool.

*Aur.* Then, no farther meddling with adventures, or contrivances of your own: they are all belonging to the Territories of wit, from whence you are banish'd.

*Ben.* But what if my imagination should really furnish me with some —

*Aur.* Not a Plot, I hope?

*Ben.* No, Sir, no Plot; but some expedient then, to mollify the word, when your invention has fail'd you?

*Aur.* Think it a temptation of the Devil, and believe it not.

*Ben.* Then farewell all the happiness of my life.

*Cam.* You know your doom, *Benito*, and now you may take your choice, whether you will renounce wit, or eating.

*Ben.* Well, Sir, I must continue my Body at what rate soever: and the rather, because now there's no farther need of me in your adventures; for I was assur'd, by *Beatrice*, this morning, that her two Mistresses are to be put in Pension in the Nunnery of *Benedictines*, this afternoon.

*Cam.* Then I am miserable.

*Aur.* And you have defer'd the telling it till it is past time to study for prevention.

*Cam.* Let us run thither immediately, and either perish in't, or free them. You'll assist me with your Sword?

*Aur.* Yes, if I cannot do't to more purpose, with my counsel. Let us first play the fairest of our Game, 'tis time enough to snatch when we have lost it.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE III.

A Chappel.

*The Duke, Valerio, Attendants. At the other door, Laura, Violetta, Beatrix, Mario. Instrumental and vocal Musick. In the time of which, Enter Aurelian and Camillo. After the Musick, Enter Sophronia, Lucretia, Hippolita, and other Nuns.*

*Duke to Valeria, who?* I needed not those marks to know her. *had whisper'd to him.* } She's one continu'd excellence; she's all over Miracle,

*Soph. to the Duke.* We know, Sir, we are not capable, by our Entertainments, of adding any thing to your pleasures, and therefore we must attribute this favour of your presence, to your piety and devotion.

*Duke.* You have treated me with Harmony so excellent, that I believ'd my self among a quire of angels; especially, when I beheld so fair a Troop behind you.

*Soph.* Their Beauty, Sir, is wholly dedicated to Heaven, and is no way ambitious of a commendation, which from your mouth might raise a pride in any other of the Sex.

*Cam.* I am impatient, and can bear no longer. Let what will happen—

*Anr.* Do you not see your ruine inevitable? Draw in a holy place! and in the presence of the Duke!

*Mar.* I do not like *Camillo's* being here: I must cut short the Ceremony.

*[Whispers Sophronia,*

*Soph. to Lau.}* Come, fair Cousins, we hope to make the Cloy-and Violet, } steral life so pleasing, that it may be an inducement to you to quit the wicked world for ever.

*Violetta passing by Camillo.}* Take that, and read it at your leisure. *[Conveyes a Note into his hand.*

*Cam.* A Ticker, as I live, *Aurelian.*

*Anr.* Steal off, and be thankful: If that be my *Beatrix* with *Laura*



*Laura* , she's most confoundedly ugly. If ever we had come to Love-work, and a Candle had been brought us, I had saln back from that face, like a Buck Rabbet in coupling.

[*Exeunt Camillo and Aurelian.*

*Soph.* Daughters, the time of our Devotion calls us. All happiness to your Highness.

*Luc. to Hip.* Little thinks my venerable old Love there, that his Mistress in Masquerade is so near him. Now do I e'en long to abuse that Fop-gravity again.

*Hip.* Methinks he looks on us.

*Luc.* Farewell , poor love, I am she, I am , for all my demure looks, that treated thee so inhumanely last night.

[*She is going off, after Sophonia.*

*Duke following her.* Stay Lady ; I would speak with you.

*Luc.* Ah ! (screaking.)

*Soph.* How now, Daughter ? What's the meaning of that unbecoming noise you make ?

*Luc. aside.* If I speak to him, he will discover my voice, and then I am ruin'd.

*Duke.* If your name be *Lucretia* , I have some business of concernment with you.

*Luc. to Soph.* Dear Madam, for Heavens sake make haste into the Cloyster, the Duke pursues me on some ill design.

*Soph. to the Duke.* 'Tis not permitted, Sir, for Maids once entred into Religion, to hold discourses here of worldly things.

*Duke.* But my discourses are not worldly Madam ;  
I had a Vision in the dead of night,  
Which show'd me this fair Virgin in my sleep,  
And told me, that from her I should be taught  
Where to bestow large Almes, and great Endowments,  
On some near Monastery.

*Soph.* ————— Stay, *Lucretia*,  
The Holy Vision's will must be obey'd.

[*Exeunt Soph. cum suis.*

*Luc. aside.* He does not know me, sure ; and yet I fear  
Religion is the least of his business with me.

*Duke.*

*Duke.* I see, Madam, Beauty will be beauty in any habit.  
Though I confess, the splendor of a Court  
Were a much fitter Scene for yours, then is  
A Cloyster'd privacy.

*Luc. counter-7* The World has no temptations for a mind  
*feiting her voice.* So fix'd, and rais'd above it,  
This humble Cell contains and bounds my wishes.  
My Charity gives you my Prayers, and that's all my  
Converse with humane kind.

*Duke.* Since when, Madam, have the World and you been upon  
these equal termes of hostility? time was you have been better  
friends.

*Luc.* No doubt I have been vain, and sinful; but, the remem-  
brance of those dayes cannot be pleasant to me now, and therefore,  
if you please, do not refresh their Memory.

*Duke.* Their memory! you speak as if they were Ages past.

*Luc.* You think me still what I was once, a vain, fond, giddy  
creature; I see, Sir, whether your discourses tend, and therefore  
take my leave.

*Duke.* Yes, Madam, I know you see whither my discourses tend,  
and therefore 'twill not be convenient that you should take your  
leave. Disguise your self no farther; you are known, as well as  
you knew me in Masquerade.

*Luc.* I am not us'd enough to the World, to interpret Riddles;  
therefore, once more, heaven keep you.

*Duke.* This will not do: your voice, your meen, your stature, be-  
tray you for the same I saw last night: you know the time and  
place.

*Luc.* You were not in this Chappel; and, I am bound by vow  
to stir no farther.

*Duke.* But you had too much wit to keep that vow.

*Luc.* If you persist, Sir, in this raving madness,  
I can bring witness of my innocence.

*Duke.* To save that labour, see if you know that hand, and let  
that justify you. [Is going.]

*Luc.* What do I see! my ruine is inevitable.

*Duke.* You know you merit it:  
You us'd me ill, and now are in my power.

*Luc.*

*Luc.* But you, I hope, are much too noble  
To destroy the Fame of a poor silly Woman?

*Duke.* Then, in few words, for I am bred a Souldier,  
And must speak plain, it is your Love I ask:  
If you deny, this Letter is produc'd;  
You know the consequence.

*Luc.* I hope I do not:  
For, though there are appearances against me,  
Enough to give you hope I durst not shun you;  
Yet, could you see my heart, 'tis a white Virgin-Tablet,  
On which no Characters of earthly love  
Were ever writ: and, 'twixt the Prince and me;  
If there were any Criminal affection,  
May heaven this minute——

*Duke.* Swear not; I believe you:  
For could I think my Son had e're enjoy'd you,  
I should not be his Rival. Since he has not,  
I may have so much kindness for my self  
To wish that happiness.

*Luc.* You ask me what I must not grant,  
Nor if I lov'd you would: you know my vow of Chastity.

*Duke.* Yet again that senceless argument?  
The Vows of Chastity can ne're be broken,  
Where Vows of secrecy are kept: those I'll swear with you.  
But 'tis enough, at present, you know my resolution.  
I would persuade, not force you to my Love;  
And to that end I give you this nights respite.  
Consider all, that you may fear or hope;  
And think that on your grant, or your denial,  
Depends a double welfare, yours and mine.

*Luc.* A double ruine rather, if I grant: For what can I expect  
[Exit.  
from such a Father, when such a Son betrayes me! Could I think  
of all Mankind, that *Frederick* could be base. And, with the va-  
nity of vulgar Souls betray a Virgins fame: one who esteem'd  
him, and I much fear did more than barely so —— But I dare not  
examine my self farther; for fear of confessing to my own thoughts,  
a tenderness of which he is unworthy.

*Enter*

*Enter Hippolita.*

*Hip.* I watch'd till your old Gallant was gone, to bring you news of your young one. A mischief on these old dry Lovers, they are good for nothing but tedious talking; Well, yonder's the Prince at the Grate; I hope I need say no more to you.

*Luc.* I'll come when I have recover'd my self a little. I am a wretched creature, *Hippolita*; the Letter I writ the Prince——

*Hip.* I know it, is faln into his Fathers hands by accident. He's as wretched as you too. Well, well, it shall be my part to bring you together; and then, if two young people that have opportunity, can be wretched and melancholy——I'll go before and meet *Ascanio*. *[Exit.*

*Luc.* I am half unwilling to go, because I must be accessary to her Assignation with *Ascanio*; but, for once, I'll meet the Prince in the Garden walk: I am glad however that he is less criminal than I thought him. *[Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV.

*The Nunnery-Garden.*

*Hippolita, Ascanio, meeting Laura and Violetta.*

*Hip.* I hear some walking this way. Who goes there?

*Lau.* We are the two new Pensioners, *Laura* and *Violetta*.

*Hip.* Go in, to your devotion: these undue hours of walking favour too much of worldly thoughts.

*Lau.* Let us retire to the Arbor, where, by this time, I believe our Friends are. Goodnight, Sister.

*Hip.* Good Angels guard you. *[Exit Laura and Violetta.*  
Now, Brother, the coast is clear, and we have the Garden to our selves, Do you remember how you threatened me? but that's all one. How good soever the opportunity may be, so long as we two resolve to be vertuous,

H

*Asca.*

*The Affignation; or,*

*Asca.* Speak for your self, Sister, for I am wickedly inclin'd. Yet, I confess, I have some remorse, when I consider you are in Religion.

*Hip.* We should do very well to consider that, both of us; for, indeed, What should young people do, but think of Goodness and Religion, especially when they love one another, and are alone too, Brother?

*Asca.* A curse on't, here comes my Lord, and *Lucretia*. We might have accomplish'd all, and been repenting by this time; yet who the Devil would have thought they should have come so soon?

— Ah —

[*Sets his Teeth.*]

*Hip.* Who the Devil would have put it to the venture? This is alwayes the fault of you raw Pages: you that are too young, never use an opportunity; and we that are elder can seldom get one. —

Ah!

[*Sets her Teeth.*]

*Enter Frederick and Lucretia.*

*Luc.* I believe, indeed, it troubled you to lose that Letter.

*Fred.* So much, Madam, that I can never forgive my self that negligence.

*Luc.* Call it not so, 'twas but a casualty, though, I confess, the consequence is dangerous; and therefore have not both of us reason to defy Love, when we see a little Gallantry is able to produce so much mischief.

*Fred. aside.* Now cannot I, for my heart, bring out one word against this Love.

*Luc.* Come, you are mute, upon a Subject that is both easie and pleasant. A man in Love is so ridiculous a creature —

*Fred.* Especially to those that are not.

*Luc.* True; for to those that are, he cannot be so: they are like the Citizens of *Bethlehem*, who never find out one anothers Maddeffs, because they are all tainted. But for such antient Fops, as (with reverence) your Father is, What reason can they have to be in Love?

*Fred.* Nay, your old Fop's unpardonable, that's certain —

But —

*Luc.* But What? Come, laugh at him.

*Fred.*

*Fred.* But, I consider, he is my Father, I can't laugh at him.

*Luc.* But, if it were another, we should see how you would insult over him.

*Fred.* Ay, if it were another ——— And yet I don't know neither, 'tis no part of good nature to insult: a man may be overtaken with a passion, or so, I know it by myself.

*Luc.* How, by your self? you are not in love, I hope?

Oh that he would confess first now!

[*Aside.*

*Fred.* But, if I were, I should be loath to be laugh'd at.

*Luc.* Since you are not in Love, you may the better counsel me: What shall I do with this same troublesome Father of yours?

*Fred.* Any thing, but love him.

*Luc.* But you know he has me at a Bay; my Letter is in his possession, and he may produce it to my ruine: therefore if I did allow him some little favour, to mollify him——

*Fred.* How, Madam? would you allow him Favours? I can never consent to it: not the least look or smile; they are all too precious, though they were to save his life.

*Luc.* What, Not your Father? Oh that he wou'd confess he lov'd me first!

[*Aside.*

*Fred.* What have I done? I shall betray my self, and confess my love, to be laugh'd at, by this hard-hearted Woman.

[*Aside.*

'Tis true, Madam, I had forgot; he is, indeed, my Father, and therefore you may use him as kindly as you please.

*Luc.* He's insensible: now he intrages me.

[*Aside.*

What if he proposes to Marry me? I am not yet profess'd, and 'twould be much to my advantage.

*Fred.* Marry you! I had rather dye a thousand deaths, than suffer it.

*Luc.* This begins to please me.

[*Aside.*

But, Why should you be so much my enemy?

*Fred.* Your enemy, Madam? Why, Do you desire it?

*Luc.* Perhaps I do,

*Fred.* Do it, Madam, since it pleases you so well.

*Luc.* But you had rather dye, than suffer it.

*Fred.* No, I have chang'd my mind: I'll live, and not be concern'd at it.

*Luc.* Do you contradict your self so soon? Then know, Sir, I did



intend to do it ; and I am glad you have given me advice so agreeable to my inclinations.

*Fred.* Heaven ! that you should not find it out ! I deliver'd your Letter on purpose to my Father, and 'twas my business, now, to come and mediate for him.

*Luc.* Pray, then, carry him the news of his good success.  
Adieu, sweet Prince.

*Fred.* Adieu, dear Madam.

*Asca.* Hey day ! What will this come to ? they have cozen'd one another into a quarrel ; just like friends in Fencing, a chance thrust comes, and then they fall to't in earnest.

*Hip.* You and I, Brother, shall never meet upon even termes, if this be not piec'd. Faces about, Madam, turn quickly to your Man, or by all that's virtuous, I'll call the Abbess.

*Asca.* I must not be so bold with you, Sir ; but, if you please, you may turn towards the Lady, and I suppose you would be glad I durst speak to you with more authority, to save the credit of your willingness.

*Fred.* Well, I'll shew her I dare stay, if it be but to confront her Malice.

*Luc.* I am sure I have done nothing to be ashamed of, that I should need to run away.

*Asca.* Pray give me leave, Sir, to ask you but one question ; Why were you so unwilling that she should be Marry'd to your Father ?

*Fred.* Because then, her Friendship must wholly cease.

*Asca.* But, you may have her Friendship, when she is Marry'd to him.

*Fred.* VVhat, when another had enjoy'd her ?

*Asca.* *Victoria, Victoria*, he loves you, Madam ; let him deny it if he can.

*Luc.* Fie, fie, love me, *Ascanio* ! I hope he would not forswear himself, when he has rail'd so much against it.

*Fred.* I hope I may love your mind, Madam ; I may Love Spiritually.

*Hip.* That's enough, that's enough : let him love the mind without the body if he can.

*Asca.* Ay, ay, when the love is once come so far, that Spiritual  
Mind



Mind will never leave pulling, and pulling, till it has drawn the beastly body after it.

*Fred.* VVell, Madam, since I must confes it, (though I expect to be laugh'd at, after my railing against Love,) I do love you all over, both Soul and Body.

*Asca.* Lord, Sir, VVhat a Tygres have you provok'd! you may see she takes it to the death that you have made this declaration.

*Hip.* I thought where all her anger was: VVhy do you not raile, Madam? Why do you not banish him? the Prince expects it; he has dealt honestly, he has told you his Mind, and you make your worst on't.

*Luc.* Because he does expect it, I am resolv'd I'll neither satisfie him nor you; I will neither raile nor laugh: let him make his worst of thar, now.

*Fred.* If I understand you right, Madam, I am happy beyond either my deserts or expectation.

*Luc.* You may give my words what interpretation you please, Sir, I shall not envy you their meaning in the kindest sence. But we are near the Jessamine-walk, there we may talk with greater freedom, because 'tis farther from the House.

*Fred.* I wait you, Madam.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE. V.

*Aurelian with a dark Lanthorn, Camillo  
and Benito.*

*Cam.* So, we are safe got over into the Nunnery-Garden; for what's to come, trust Love and Fortune.

*Aur.* This must needs be the walk she mention'd; yet, to be sure, I'll hold the Lanthorn while you read the Ticker.

*Cam. reads.* I prepar'd this Ticker, hoping to see you in the Chappel: come this evening over the Garden-wall, on the right hand, next the Tiber.

*Aur.* (We are right, I see.)

*Cam.*

*Cam.* Bring only your discreet *Benito* with you, and I will meet you, attended by my faithful *Beatrix*. *Violetta.*

*Ben.* Discreet *Benito* ! Did you hear that, Sir ?

*Aur.* Mortifie thy self for that vain thought ; and, without enquiring into the mystery of these words, which I assure thee were not meant to thee, plant thy self by that Ladder without motion, to secure our retreat ; and be sure to make no noise.

*Ben.* But, Sir, in case that——

*Aur.* Honest *Benito*, no more questions: *Bassa* is the word. Remember, thou art only taken with us, because thou hast a certain evil *Damon* who conducts thy actions, and would have been sure, by some damn'd accident or other, to have brought thee hither to disturb us.

*Cam.* I hear whispering not far from us, and I think 'tis *Violetta's* voice.

*Aur. to Benito.* Retire to your Post ; avoid, good Sathan.

*Exit Benito.*

*Enter Laura with a dark Lanthorn hid, and Violetta.*

*Cam.* Ours is the honour of the Field, Madam ; we are here before you.

*Vio.* Softly, dear friend, I think I hear some walking in the Garden.

*Cam.* Rather, let us take this opportunity for your escape from hence ; all things are here in readiness.

*Vio.* This is the second time we e're have met ; let us discourse, and know each other better first: that's the way to make sure of some love before-hand ; for, as the world goes, we know not how little we may have when we are Marry'd.

*Cam.* Losses of opportunity are fatal, in war, you know, and Love's a kind of warfare.

*Vio.* I shall keep you yet a while from close fighting.

*Cam.* But, Do you know what an hour in Love is worth ? 'Tis more precious than an Age of ordinary life ; 'tis the very Quintessence and Extract of it.

*Vio.*

*Vio.* I do not like your Chymical preparation of love; yours is all Spirit, and will fly too soon: I must see it fix'd, before I trust you. But we are near the Arbor; now our out-guards are set, let us retire a little, if you please; there we may talk more freely.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Aur. to Laura.* My Ladies Woman, methinks you are very reserv'd to night: pray advance into the Lifts; though I have seen your countenance by day, I can endure to hear you talk by night. Be cunning, and set your wit to show which is your best commodity: it will help the better to put off that drug, your Face.

*Lau.* The coarsest ware will serve such customers as you are: let it suffice, Mr. Servingman, that I have seen you too. Your face is the original of the ugliest Vizors about Town; and for wit, I would advise you to speak reverently of it, as a thing you are never like to understand.

*Aur.* Sure, *Beatrice*, you came lately from looking in your Glass, and that has given you a bad opinion of all faces. But since when am I become so notorious a fool?

*Lau.* Since yesterday; for t'other night you talk'd like a man of sense: I think your wit comes to you, as the sight of Owles does, only in the dark.

*Aur.* Why, When did you discourse by day with me?

*Lau.* You have a short memory. This afternoon, in the great street. Do you not remember when you talk'd with *Laura*?

*Aur.* But what was that to *Beatrice*?

*Lau. aside.* 'Slife, I had forgot that I am *Beatrice*. But, pray, When did you find me out to be so ugly?

*Aur.* This afternoon, in the Chappel.

*Lau.* That cannot be, for I well remember you were not there, *Benito*: I saw none but *Camillo*, and his friend the handsome stranger.

*Aur. aside.* Curse on't, I have betray'd my self.

*Lau.* I find you are an Impostor; you are not the same *Benito*: your language has nothing of the Serving-man.

*Aur.* And yours, methinks, has not much of the Waiting-woman.

*Lau.* My Lady is abus'd, and betray'd by you: but I am resolv'd I'll discover who you are.  
How? the Stranger!

[*Holds out a Lanthorn to him.*]

*Aur.*

*Aur.* Nay, Madam, if you are good at that, I'll match you there too.  
 [Holds out his Lanthorn.

O prodigy! Is *Beatrix* turn'd to *Laura*?

*Lau.* Now the question is, which of us two is the greatest cheat?

*Aur.* That's hardly to be try'd, at so short warning: Let's Marry one another, and then, twenty to one, in a Twelve Moneth we shall know.

*Lau.* Marry! Are you at that so soon, Signior? *Benito* and *Beatrix*, I confess, had some acquaintance; but *Aurelian* and *Laura* are meer strangers.

*Aur.* That ground I have gotten as *Benito*, I am resolv'd I'll keep as *Aurelian*. If you will take State upon you, I have treated you with Ceremony already; for I have woo'd you by Proxy.

*Lau.* But you would not be contented to bed me so; or give me leave to put the Sword betwixt us.

*Aur.* Yes, upon condition you'll remove it.

*Lau.* Pray let our Friends be judge of it; if you please, we'll find 'em in the Arbor.

*Aur.* Content; I am then sure of the Verdict, because the Jury is brib'd already.  
 [Exit.

## SCENE VI.

*Benito meeting Frederick, Ascanio, Lucretia  
 and Hippolita.*

*Ben.* Knowing my own merits, as I do, 'tis not impossible but some of these Harlotry Nuns may love me: Oh, here's my Master! now if I could but put this into civil termes, so as to ask his leave, and not displease him——

*Asca.* I hear one talking, Sir, just by us.

*Ben.* I am stoln from my post, Sir, but for one minute only, to demand permission of you, since it is not in our Articles, that if any of these Nuns should cast an eye or so——

*Fred.*

## Love in a Nunnery.

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*Fred.* 'Slife, we are betray'd; but I'll make this Rascal sure.

[*Draws and runs at him.*

*Ben.* Help, Murder, Murder.

[*Runs off.*

*Enter Aurelian and Camillo; Laura and Violetta  
after them.*

*Aur.* That was *Benito's* voice: we are ruin'd.

*Cam.* Oh, here they are; we must make our way.

*Aur. and the Prince make a Pass or two confusedly, and  
fight off the Stage. The Women Schreek.*

*Asca.* Never fear, Ladies. Come on, Sir; I am your Man.

*Cam. stepping back.* This is the Prince's Page, I know his voice,  
*Ascanio?*

*Asca.* Signior *Camillo*!

*Cam.* If the Prince be here, 'tis *Aurelian* is engag'd with him. Let  
us run in quickly, and prevent the mischief.

*All go off. A little Clashing within.*

*After which they all re-enter.*

*Fred. to Aur.* I hope you are not wounded.

*Aur.* No, Sir; but infinitely griev'd that——

*Fred.* No more; 'twas a mistake: but which way can we escape,  
the Abbess is coming, I see the Lights.

*Luc.* You cannot go by the Gate then. Ah me, unfortunate!

*Cam.* But over the Wall you may: we have a Ladder ready.  
Adieu, Ladies. Curse on this ill luck, where we had just perswa-  
ded e'm to go with us!

*Fred.* Farewell, sweet *Lucretia*.

*Lau.* Goodnight, *Aurelian*.

*Aur.* I, it might have prov'd a good one: Faith, shall I stay, yet,  
and make it one, in spite of the Abbess, and all her Works?

*Lau.* The Abbess is just here; you will be caught  
In the Spiritual Trap, if you should tarry.

*Aur.* That will be time enough when we two Marry.

*Exeunt severally.*

I

A C T

## ACT. V. SCENE I.

*Enter Sophronia, Lucretia, Laura, Violetta.*

*Soph.* **B**Y this, then, it appears you all are guilty;  
Only your ignorance of each others crimes  
Caus'd first that tumult, and this discovery:  
Good Heavens, that I should live to see this  
day!

Methinks these Holy Walls, the Cells, the Cloysters,  
Should all have strook a secret horror on you:  
And when, with unchast thoughts,  
You trod these lonely walks, you should have look'd  
The venerable Ghost of our first Foundress  
Should with spread arms have met you in her Shroud,  
And frighted you from Sin.

*Luc.* Alas, you need not aggravate our crimes,  
We know them to be great beyond excuse,  
And have no hope, but only from your mercy.

*Lau.* Love is, indeed, no plea within these Walls;  
But, since we brought it hither, and were forc'd,  
Not led by our own choice, to this strict life——

*Vio.* Too hard for our soft youth, and bands of love,  
Which we before had knir.

*Lau.* ————Pity your blood,  
Which runs within our veins, and since Heaven puts it  
In your sole power to ruine or to save,  
Protect us from the sordid avarice  
Of our domestick Tyrant, who deserves not  
That we should call him Uncle, or you Brother.

*Soph.* It, as I might, with Justice I should punish,  
No penance could be rigorous enough;  
But I am willing to be more indulgent.  
None of you are Profess'd: and since I see

You

You are not fit for higher happiness,  
You may have what you think the world can give you.

*Luc.* Let us adore you, Madam.

*Soph.* ————— You, *Lucretia*,  
I shall advise within.

*Vio.* ————— But for us, Madam?

*Soph.* For you, dear Nieces, I have long consider'd  
The injuries you suffer from my Brother,  
And I rejoyce it is in me to help you:  
I will endeavour, from this very hour,  
To put you both into your Lovers hands,  
Who, by your own confession, have deserv'd you;  
But so as (though 'tis done by my connivance)  
It shall not seem to be with my consent.

*Law.* You do an act of noble charity,  
And may just heaven reward it.

*Enter Hippolita and whispers Lucretia.*

*Soph.* Oh, you're a faithful Portress of a Cloyster.  
What is't you whisper to *Lucretia*?  
On your Obedience tell me.

*Luc.* ——— Since you must know, Madam,  
I have receiv'd a Courtship from the Prince  
Of *Mantoua*. The rest *Hippolita* may speak.

*Hip.* His Page *Ascanio* is at the grate,  
To know, from him, how you had escap'd this danger;  
And brings with him those Habits——

*Soph.* I find that here has been a long commerce.  
What Habits?

*Luc.* I blush to tell you, Madam. They were Masking Habits,  
in which we went abroad.

*Soph.* O strange Impiety! Well, I conclude  
You are no longer for Religious cloathing:  
You would infect our Order.

*Luc. kneeling.* Madam, you promis'd us forgiveness.

*Soph.* I have done; for 'tis indeed too late to chide.

*Hip.* With *Ascanio*, there are two Gentlemen; *Aurelian* and *Ca-*



*The Assignment; or,*

*millo* I think they call themselves, who came to me, recommended from the Prince, and desir'd to speak with *Laura* and *Violetta*.

*Soph.* I think they are your Lovers, Nieces.

*Vio.* Madam, they are.

*Hip.* But, for fear of discovery from your Uncle *Mario*, whose House you know, joyns to the Monastery, are both in Masquerade.

*Soph. to Lau- & Vio.* This opportunity must not be lost. You two shall take the Masking-habits instantly, And, in them, scape your jealous Uncle's eyes. When you are happy, make me so, by hearing your success.

*Kisses them. Exit Lau, and Vio.*

*Luc.* A sudden thought is sprung within my mind, Which, by the same indulgence you have shown, May make me happy too. I have not time To tell you now, for fear I lose this opportunity. When I return from speaking with *Afcanio*, I shall declare the secrets of my Love, And crave your farther help.

*Soph.* In all that virtue will permit you shall not fail to find it.

*Exit Lucretia.*

*Hip.* Madam, the foolish Fellow whom we took grows troublesome; What shall we do with him?

*Soph.* Send for the Magistrate; he must be punish'd — Yet hold; that would betray the other secret. Let him be strait turn'd out, on this Condition, That he presume not ever to disclose He was within these walls. I'll speak with him: Come, and attend me to him.

*Exit Sophronia.*

*Hip.* You fit to be an Abbess? We that live out of the World, should at least have the common sence of those that live farr from Town; if a Pedler comes by 'em once a year, they will not let him go without providing themselves with what they want.

*Exit after Sophronia.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

*The Street.*

Aurelian, Camillo, Laura, Violetta: *all in Mask-  
ing habits.*

*Cam.* This generosity of the Abbess is never to be forgot; and it is the more to be esteem'd because it was the less to be expected.

*Vio.* At length, my *Camillo*, I see my self safe within your Armes; and yet, methinks, I can never be enough secure of you: for, now I have nothing else to fear, I am afraid of you; I fear your constancy: they say possession is so dangerous to Lovers, that more of them die of Surfeits than of Fasting.

*Lau.* You'll be rambling too, *Aurelian*, I do not doubt it, if I would let you; but I'll take care to be as little a Wife, and as much a Mistress to you, as is possible: I'll be sure to be alwayes pleasant, and never suffer you to be cloy'd.

*Aur.* You are certainly in the right: pleasantness of humour makes a Wife last in the sweet meat, when it will no longer in the Fruit. But pray let's make haste to the next honest Priest, that can say Grace to us, and take our appetites while they are coming.

*Cam.* That way leads to the *Austin-Fryers*, there lives a Father of my acquaintance.

*Lau.* I have heard of him; he has a mighty stroke at Matrimonies, and mumbles 'em over as fast, as if he were teaching us to forget 'em all the while.

*Enter.*

*Enter Benito, and over-hears the last speech.*

*Ben. Cappari*; that's the voice of Madam *Laura*. Now, *Benito*, is the time to repair the lost honour of thy wit, and to blot out the last adventure of the Nunnery.

*Vio.* That way I hear company, let's go about by this other street, and shun 'em.

*Ben.* That voice I know too; 'tis the younger Sister, *Violetta's*. Now have these two most treacherously convey'd themselves out of the Nunnery, for my Master and *Camillo*, and given up their persons to those lewd Rascals in Masquerade; but I'll prevent 'em. Help there, Thieves and Ravishers, villanous Maskers, stop Robbers, stop Ravishers.

*Cam.* We are pursu'd that way, let's take this street.

*Lau.* Save your selves, and leave us.

*Cam.* We'll rather dye than leave you.

*Enter at several doors Duke of Mantoua and Guards,  
and Don Mario and Servants, with Torches.*

*Aur.* So, now the way is shut up on both sides. We'll dye merrily however: — have at the fairest.

*Aurelian and Camillo fall upon the Dukes Guards, and are seiz'd behind by Mario's Servants. At the drawing of Swords, Benito runs off.*

*Duke.* Are these insolencies usually committed in *Rome* by night? it has the fame of a well-govern'd City; and methinks, *Don Mario*, it does somewhat reflect on you to suffer these Disorders.

*Mar.* They are not to be hinder'd in the *Carnival*: you see, Sir, they have assum'd the Priviledge of Maskers.

*Lau. to Au.* If my Uncle know us, we are ruin'd; therefore be sure you do not speak.

*Duke.* How then can we be satisfy'd this was not a device of Masking, rather than a design of Ravishing?

*Mar.* Their accuser is fled, I saw him run at the beginning of the scuffle; but I'll examine the Ladies.

*Vio.*

*Fio.* Now we are lost.

*Duke coming near Laura takes notice of her Habit.*

*Duke aside.* 'Tis the same, 'tis the same; I know *Lucretia* by her Habit: I'm sure I am not mistaken. Now, Sir, you may cease your examination, I know the Ladies.

*Anr. to Cam.* How the Devil does he know 'em?

*Cam.* 'Tis alike to us; they are lost both ways.

*Duke taking.* Madam, you may confess your self to me. What-

*Laura aside.* ever your design was in leaving the Nunnery, your reputation shall be safe. I'll not discover you, provided you grant me the happiness I last requested.

*Lau.* I know not, Sir, how you could possibly come to know me, or of my design in quitting the Nunnery; but this I know, that my Sister and my self are both unfortunate, except your Highness be pleas'd to protect us from our Uncle; at least, not to discover us.

*Duke.* His Holiness your Uncle, shall never be acquainted with your flight, on Condition you will wholly renounce my Son, and give your self to me.

*Lau.* Alas, Sir, For whom do you mistake me?

*Duke.* I mistake you not, Madam: I know you for *Lucretia*. You forget that your Disguise betrays you.

*Lau.* Then, Sir, I perceive I must disabuse you: if you please to withdraw a little, that I may not be seen by others, I will pull off my Mask, and discover to you that *Lucretia* and I have no resemblance, but only in our misfortunes.

*Duke.* 'Tis in vain, Madam, this dissembling: I protest if you pull off your Mask, I will hide my Face, and not look upon you, to convince you that I know you.

*Enter Benito.*

*Ben.* So, now the fray is over, a man may appear again with safety! Oh, the Rogues are caught I see, and the Damsels deliver'd. This was the effect of my valour at the second hand.

*Anr.* Look, look, *Camillo*, it was my perpetual Fool that caus'd all this, and now he stands yonder, laughing at his mischief, as the Devil is pictur'd, grinning behind the Witch upon the Gallows.

*Ben.*

*Ben. to Mario.* I see, Sir, you have got your Women, and I am glad on't: I took 'em just flying from the Nunnery.

*Duke to Lau.* You see that Fellow knows you too.

*Mar.* Were these Women flying from a Nunnery?

*Ben.* These Women? Hey day! then, it seems, you do not know they are your Nieces.

*Duke.* His Nieces, say you? Take heed, Fellow, you shall be punish'd severely if you mistake.

*Cam.* Speak to *Benito* in time, *Aurelian*.

*Aur.* The Devil's in him, he's running down-hill full speed, and there is no stopping him.

*Mar.* My Nieces?

*Ben.* Your Nieces? Why, Do you doubt it? I praise Heaven I never met but with two half-wits in my life, and my Master's one of 'em; I will not name the other, at this time.

*Duke.* Ifay, they are not they.

*Ben.* I am sure they are *Laura* and *Violetta*, and that those two Rogues were running away with 'em, and that I believe with their consent.

*Vio.* Sister, 'Tis in vain to deny our selves; you see our ill fortune pursues us unavoidably.

[Turning up her Masque.  
Yes, Sir, we are *Laura* and *Violetta*, whom you have made unhappy by your Tyranny.

*Lau, turning up her Mask.* And these two Gentlemen are no Ravishers, } but——

*Ben.* How, no Ravishers? yes, to my knowledge, they are——

*As he speaks, Aurelian pulls off his Mask.*

no Ravishers, as Madam *Laura* was saying; but two as honest Gentlemen as e're broke bread: My own dear Master, and so forth!

*Runs to Aurelian, who thrusts him back.*

*Enter Valerio, and whispers the Duke, giving him a Paper, which he reads, and seems pleas'd.*

*Mar.* *Aurelian* and *Camillo*! I'll see you in safe custody, and, for

for, these Fugitives, go, carry 'em to my Sister, and desire her to have a better care of her Kinswomen.

*Vio.* We shall live yet to make you refund our Portions. Farewell *Camillo*; comfort your self; remember there's but a Wall betwixt us.

*Lau.* And I'll cut through that Wall with Vineger, but I'll come to you, *Aurelian*.

*Anr.* I'll cut through the Grates with *Aqua-fortis*, but I'll meet you. Think of these things, and despair and dye, old Gentleman.

*Aurelian and Camillo are carry'd off on one side, and  
Laura and Violetta on the other.*

*Ben.* All things go crofs to men of sence: would I had been born with the brains of a Shop-keeper, that I might have thriven with; out knowing why I did so. Now must I follow my Master to the Prison, and, like an ignorant Customer that comes to buy, must offer him my back-side, tell him I trust to his honesty, and desire him to please himself, and so be satisfy'd. [Exit.

*Duke to Valerio.* I am overjoy'd, I'll see her immediately: now my business with *Don Mario* is at an end, I need not desire his company to introduce me to the Abbess, this Assignment from *Lucretia* shows me a nearer way. Noble *Don Mario*, it was my business when this accident happen'd in the street to have made you a visit; but now I am prevented by an occasion which calls me another way.

*Mar.* I receive the intention of that honour as the greatest happiness that cou'd befall me: in the mean time, if my attendance —

*Duke.* By no means, Sir, I must of necessity go in private, and therefore, if you please, you shall omit the ceremony.

*Mar.* A happy even to your Highness. Now will I go to my Sister the Abbess, before I sleep, and desire her to take more care of her Flock, or, for all our Relation, I shall make complaint, and endeavour to ease her of her charge. [Exit.

*Duke.* So, now we are alone, What said *Lucretia*?

*Val.* When first I press'd her to this Assignment, She spoke like one in doubt what she should do; She demur'd much upon the decency of it, And somewhat too she seem'd to urge, of her Engagement to the Prince: in short, Sir, I perceiv'd her wavering; and clos'd with the opportunity.



*Duke.* O, when women are once irresolute, betwixt the former love and the new one, they are sure to come over to the latter : the wind, their nearest likeness, seldome chops about to return into the old corner.

*Val.* In conclusion, she consented to the interview, and for the rest, I urg'd it not, for I suppose she will hear reason sooner from your mouth than mine.

*Duke.* Her Letter is of the same tenor with her Discourse, full of doubts and doubles, like a hunted Hare when she's near tyr'd. The Garden, you say, is the place appointed ?

*Val.* It is, Sir ; and the next half hour the time : but, Sir, I fear the Prince your Son will never bear the loss of her with patience.

*Duke.* 'Tis no matter ; let the young Gallant storm to night, to morrow he departs from *Rome*.

*Val.* That, Sir, will be severe.

*Duke.* He has already receiv'd my commands to travel into *Germany* : I know it stung him to the quick ; but he's too dangerous a Rival : the Souldiers love him too ; when he's absent they will respect me more.

[*Exeunt Guards.*]

But I defer my happiness too long ; dismiss my Guards there.

The pleasures of old age brook no delay :  
Seldome they come, and soon they fly away.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.

Prince and Ascanio.

*Fred.* 'Tis true, he is my Father ; but when Nature  
Is dead in him, Why should it live in me ?  
What have I done, that I am banish'd *Rome*,  
The Worlds delight, and my Souls joy *Lucretia*,  
And sent to reel with midnight Beasts in *Almain* ?  
I cannot, will not bear it.

*Asca.* I'm sure you need not, Sir : the Army is all yours ;  
they with a youthful Monarch, and will resent your injuries.

*Fred.*

*Fred.* Heaven forbid it. And yet I cannot lose *Lucretia*.  
There's something I would do, and yet would shun  
The ill that must attend it.

*Asa.* You must resolve, for the time presses. She told me, this  
hour, she had sent for your Father: what she means I know not,  
for she seem'd doubtful, and would not tell me her inten-  
tion.

*Fred.* If she be false; — yet, Why should I suspect her? yet,  
Why should I not? she's a Woman, that includes ambition, and  
inconstancy: then, she's tempted high: 'twere unreasonable to ex-  
pect she should be faithful: well, something I have resolv'd and will  
about it instantly: and if my Friends prove faithful I shall prevent  
the worst.

*Enter Aurelian and Camillo guarded.*

*Aurelian and Camillo?* How came you thus attended?

*Cam.* You may guess at the occasion, Sir, pursuing the adven-  
ture which brought us to meet you in the Garden, we were taken by  
*Don Mario*.

*Aur.* And, as the Devil would have it, when both we and our  
Mistresses were in expectation of a more pleasant lodging.

*Fred.* Faith, that's very hard, when a man has charg'd and prim'd,  
and taken aim, to be hinder'd of his shoot——Souldiers, release  
these Gentlemen; I'll answer it.

*Cap.* Sir, we dare not disobey our Orders.

*Fred.* I'll stand betwixt you and danger. In the mean time take  
this, as an acknowledgment of the kindness you do me.

*Cap.* Ay, marry, there's Rhetorique in Gold: Who can deny  
these arguments? Sir, you may dispose of our prisoners as you please;  
we'll use your name if we are call'd in question.

*Fred.* Do so. Good-night good Souldiers. [*Exeunt Souldiers.*  
Now, Gentlemen, no thanks, you'll find occasion instantly to re-  
imburse me of my kindness.

*Cam.* Nothing but want of liberty could have hinder'd us from  
serving you.

*Fred.* Meet me, within this half hour, at our Monastery ; and if, in the mean time, you can pick up a dozen of good Fellows, who dare venture their lives bravely, bring them with you.

*Aur.* I hope the Cause is bad too, otherwise we shall not deserve your thanks : may it be for demolishing that cursed Monastery.

*Fred.* Come, *Ascanio*, follow me.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

## SCENE IV.

### *The Nunnery-Garden.*

Duke, Lucretia.

*Luc.* In making this appointment,  
I go too far, for one of my profession ;  
But I have a divining Soul within me,  
Which tells me, trust repos'd in noble natures  
Obliges them the more.

*Duke.* I come to be commanded, not to govern,  
Those few soft words you sent me, have quite alter'd  
My rugged nature ; if it still be violent,  
'Tis only fierce and eager to obey you,  
Like some impetuous flood, which Master'd once,  
With double force bends backward.

The place of Treaty shows you strongest here ;  
For still the vanquish'd sues for peace abroad,  
While the proud Victor makes his termes at home.

*Luc.* That peace, I see, will not be hard to make  
When either side shows confidence of noble dealing  
From the other.

*Duke.* And this, sure, is our case, since both are met alone.

*Luc.* 'Tis mine, Sir, more than yours.  
To meet you single, shows I trust your virtue ;  
But you appear distrustful of my Love.

*Duke.* You wrong me much, I am not.

*Luc.* Excuse me, Sir, you keep a curb upon me :

You awe me with a Letter, which you hold  
As Hostage of my Love; and Hostages  
Are ne'r requir'd but from suspected Faith.

*Duke* We are not yet in termes of perfect peace;  
When e're you please to seal the Articles,  
Your pledge shall be restor'd.

*Luc.* That were the way to keep us still at distance;  
For what we fear, we cannot truly love.

*Duke.* But how can I be then secure, that when  
Your fear is o're your love will still continue?

*Luc.* Make tryal of my gratitude; you'll find  
I can acknowledge kindness.

*Duke.* But that were to forego the faster hold  
To take a loose, and weaker.

Would you not judge him mad who held a Lion  
In chains of Steel, and chang'd e'm for a twine?

*Luc.* But love is soft,  
Not of the Lion's nature, but the Dove's;  
An Iron chain would hang too heavy on a tender neck.

*Duke.* Since on one side there must be confidence,  
Why may not I expect, as well as you,  
To have it plac'd in me? Repose your trust  
Upon my Royal word.

*Luc.* As 'tis the priviledge of womankind  
That men should court our Love,  
And make the first advances; so it follows  
That you should first oblige; for 'tis our weakness  
Gives us more cause of fear, and therefore you,  
Who are the stronger Sex, should first secure it.

*Duke.* But, Madam, as you talk of fear from me,  
I may as well suspect design from you,

*Luc.* Design! of giving you my Love more freely,  
Of making you a Title to my heart,  
Where you by force would reign.

*Duke.* O that I could believe you! but your words  
Are not enough disorder'd for true love;  
They are not plain, and hearty, as are mine;  
But full of art, and close insinuation:

· You

You promise all, but give me not one proof  
Of love before; not the least earnest of it.

*Luc.* And, What is then this midnight conversation?  
These silent hours divided from my sleep?  
Nay, more; stoln from my Prayers with Sacrilege,  
And here transfer'd to you? This guilty hand,  
Which should be us'd in dropping holy Beads,  
But now, bequeath'd to yours? This heaving heart,  
Which only should be throbbing for my sins,  
But which now beats uneven time for you?  
These are my arts! and these are my designs!

*Duke.* I love you more, *Lucretia*, than my Soul;  
Nay, than yours too, for I would venture both  
That I might now enjoy you; and if what  
You ask me did not make me fear to lose you,  
Though it were even my life, you should not be deny'd it.

*Luc.* Then I will ask no more.  
Keep my Letter, to upbraid me with it;  
To Say, when I am sully'd with your Lust,  
And fit to be forsaken, Go, *Lucretia*,  
To your first love; for this, for this, I leave you.

*Duke.* Oh, Madam, never think that day can come!

*Luc.* It must, it will, I read it in your looks;  
You will betray me when I'm once engag'd.

*Duke.* If not my Faith, your Beauty will secure you.

*Luc.* My Beauty is a Flower upon the stalk,  
Goodly to see; but, gather'd for the scent,  
And once with eagerness press'd to your nostrils,  
The sweet's drawn out, 'tis thrown with scorn away.  
But I am glad I find you out so soon:  
I simply lov'd, and meant (with shame I own it)  
To trust my Virgin-honour in your hands;  
I ask'd not wealth, for hire; and, but by chance,  
(I wonder that I thought on't) beg'd one trial,  
And, but for form, to have pretence to yield,  
And that you have deny'd me. Farewell: I could  
Have lov'd you, and yet, perhaps, I——

*Duke.* O speak, speak out, and do not drown that word,

It seem'd as if it would have been a kind one,  
And yours are much too precious to be lost.

*Luc.* Perhaps——I cannot yet leave loving you.

There 'twas. But I recall'd it in my mind,

And made it false before I gave it Ayr.

Once more, farewell——I wonnot ;

Now I can say I wonnot, wonnot love you.

[*Going.*

*Duke.* You shall ; and this shall be the Seal of my affection.

[*Gives the Letter.*

There, take it, my *Lucretia* ; I give it with more joy,

Than I with grief receiv'd it.

*Luc.* Good night ; I'll thank you for't some other time.

*Duke.* You'll not abuse my love ?

*Luc.* No ; but secure my Honour.

*Duke.* I'll force it from your hands.

[*Lucretia runs.*

*Luc.* Help, help, or I am ravish'd ; help, for heavens sake.

Hippolita, Laura, and Violetta within, in  
several places.

*Within.* Help, help *Lucretia* ; they bear away *Lucretia* by  
force.

*Duke.* I think there is a Devil in every corner.

*Enter Valerio.*

*Val.* Sir, the design was lay'd on purpose for you, and all the  
women plac'd to cry. Make haste away ; avoid the shame for hea-  
vens sake.

*Duke going.* O, I could fire this Monastery !

*Enter Frederick and Ascanio.*

(*Frederick entering speaks as to some behind him*)

*Fred.* Pain of your lives, let none of you presume to enter but  
my self.

*Duke.* My Son ! O, I could burst with spite, and dye with shame,  
to be thus apprehended ! this is the baseness and cowardise of guilt :

an



an Army now were not so dreadful to me as that Son, o're whom the right of Nature gives me power.

*Fred.* Sir, I am come——

*Duke.* To laugh at first, and then to blaze abroad  
The weakness, and the follies of your Father.

*Val.* Sir, he has Men in Armes attending him.

*Duke.* I know my doom then. You have taken a popular occasion; I am now a ravisher of chastity, fit to be made prisoner first, and then depos'd.

*Fred.* You will not hear me, Sir.

*Duke.* No, I confess I have deserv'd my fate;  
For, What had these gray haire to do with Love?  
Or, if th' unseemly folly would possess me,  
Why should I choose to make my Son my Rival:

*Fred.* Sir, you may add you banish'd me from *Rome*,  
And from the light of it, *Lucretia's* eyes.

*Duke.* Nay, if thou aggravat'st my crimes, thou giv'st  
Me right to justify'em: thou doubly art my slave,  
Both Son and Subject. I can do thee no wrong,  
Nor hast thou right t'arraign or punish me:  
But thou inquir'st into thy Fathers years;  
Thy swift ambition could not stay my death,  
But must ride post to Empire. Lead me now:  
Thy crimes have made me guiltless to my self,  
And given me face to bear the publick scorn.  
You have a guard without?

*Fred.* I have some friends.

*Duke.* Speak plainly your intent.  
I love not a sophisticated truth,  
With an allay of lye in't.

*Fred. kneeling.* This is not, Sir, the posture of a Rebel,  
But of a suppliant, if the Name of Son  
Be too much honour to me.  
What first I purpos'd, I scarce know my self.  
Love, Anger, and Revenge then rowl'd within me,  
And yet, ev'n then, I was not hurry'd farther  
Than to preserve my own.

*Duke.*———Your own! What mean you?

*Fred.*

*Fred.* My Love, and my *Lucretia* ; which I thought  
In my then boyling passion, you pursu'd  
With some injustice, and much violence ;  
This led me to repell that force by force.  
'Twas easie to surprize you, when I knew  
Of your intended visit.

*Duke.* ————— Thank my folly.

*Fred.* But reason now has reassum'd its place,  
And makes me see how black a crime it is  
To use a force upon my Prince and Father.

*Duke.* You give me hope you will resign *Lucretia*.

*Fred.* Ah no : I never can resign her to you ;  
But, Sir, I can my life : which, on my knees,  
I tender, as th'attoning Sacrifice.

Or if your hand (because you are a Father)  
Be loath to take away that life you gave,  
I will redeem your crime, by making it  
My own : So you shall still be innocent, and I  
Dye blest'd, and unindebted for my being.

*Duke embracing him.* O *Frederick*, you are too much a Son,  
And I too little am a Father : You,  
And you alone, have merited *Lucretia*.  
'Tis now my only grief,  
I can do nothing to requite this virtue ;  
For to restore her to you  
Is not an act of generosity,  
But a scant, niggard Justice ; yet I love her  
So much, that even this little which I do  
Is like the bounty of an Usurer ;  
High to be priz'd from me,  
Because 'tis drawn from such a wretched mind.

*Fred. kissing his hands.* You give me now a second, better life ;  
But, that the gift may be more easie to you,  
Consider, Sir, *Lucretia* did not Love you :  
I fear to say ne'r would.

*Duke.* You do well, to help me to o'recome that difficulty :  
I'll weigh that, too, hereafter. For a love,  
So violent as mine, will ask long time,  
And much of reason, to effect the cure.

My present care shall be to make you happy ;  
For that will make my wish impossible,  
And then the remedies will be more easie.

*Enter Sophronia, Lucretia, Violetta, Laura, Hippolita.*

*Soph.* I have, with joy, o'reheard this happy change,  
And come, with blessings, to applaud your conquest,  
Over the greatest of Mankind, your self.

*Duke.* I hope 'twill be a full, and lasting one.

*Luc. kneeling.* Thus, let me kneel, and pay my thanks and duty.

Both to my Prince, and Father ?

*Duke.* Rise, rise, too charming Maid ; for yet I cannot  
Call you Daughter: that first name, *Lucretia*,  
Hangs on my lips, and would be still pronounc'd.  
Look not too kindly on me ; one sweet glance,  
Perhaps, would ruine both: therefore, I'll go  
And try to get new strength to bear your eyes.  
Till then, Farewell. Be sure you love my *Fredrick*,  
And do not hate his Father. *Exit Duke and Valerio.*

*Fred. at the door.* Now, friends, you may appear.

*Enter Aurelian, Camillo, Benito.*

Your pardon, Madam, that we thus intrude  
On holy ground: your self best know it could not  
Be avoided, and it shall be my care it be excus'd.

*Soph.* Though Sovereign Princes bear a priviledge,  
Of entering when they please within our walls,  
In others, 'tis a crime past dispensation :  
And therefore, to avoid a publick scandal,  
Be pleas'd, Sir, to retire, and quit this Garden.

*Aur.* We shall obey you, Madam: But, that we may do it with  
less regret, we hope you will give these Ladies leave to accompa-  
ny us.

*Soph.* They shall.

And Necesses, for my self, I only ask you  
To justify my conduct to the world,  
That none may think I have betray'd a trust,  
But freed you from a Tyranny.

*Lau.* Our duty binds us to acknowledge it.

*Cam.* And our gratitude, to witness it.

*Vio.* With a holy, and lasting remembrance of your favour.

*Fred.* And it shall be my care, either by reason to bend your Uncle's will, or, by my Father's interest, to force your Dowry from his hands.

*Ben. to Aur.* Pray, Sir, let us make haste over these Walls again, these Gardens are unlucky to me: I have lost my reputation of *Musick* in the one of 'em, and of wit in the other.

*Aur. to Lau.* Now, *Laura*, you may take your choice betwixt the two *Benito's*, and consider whether you had rather he should Serenade you in the Garden, or I in Bed to night.

*Lau.* You may be sure I shall give Sentence for *Benito*; for, the effect of your Serenading would be to make me pay the *Musick* nine Moneths hence.

*Hip. to Asca.* You see, Brother, here's a General Jayle-delivery: there has been a great deal of bustle and disturbance in the Cloyster to night; enough to distract a Soul which is given up, like me, to contemplation: and therefore, if you think fit, I could een be content to retire, with you, into the World; and, by way of Penance, to Marry you; which, as Husbands and Wives go now, is a greater Mortification than a Nunnery.

*Asca.* No, Sister, if you love me, keep to your Monastery: I'll come now and then to the Grate and beg you a Recreation. But I know my self so well, that, if I had you one twelve Moneth in the world, I should run my self into a Cloyster, to be rid of you.

*Soph.* Neeces, once more farewell. Adieu, *Lucretia*:  
My wishes and my prayers attend you all.

*Luc. to Fred.* I am so fearful,  
That, though I gladly run to your embraces,  
Yet, ventring in the World a second time,  
Methinks I put to Sea in a rough storm,  
VVith shipwracks round about me.

*Fred.* My Dear, be kinder to your self, and me,  
And let not fear fright back our coming joyes;  
For we, at length, stand reconcil'd to fate:  
And now to fear, when to such bliss we move,  
VVere not to doubt our Fortune, but our Love,

Epilogue.

# Epilogue.

**S**ome have expected from our Bills to day  
To find a Satyre in our Poet's Play.  
The Zealous Rout from Coleman-street did run,  
To see the Story of the Fryer and Nun.  
Or Tales, yet more Ridiculous to hear,  
Vouch'd by their Vicar of Ten pounds a year ;  
Of Nuns, who did against Temptation Pray,  
And Discipline laid on the Pleasant way :  
Or that to please the Malice of the Town,  
Our Poet should in some close Cell have shown  
Some Sister, Playing at Content alone :  
This they did hope ; the other side did fear,  
And both you see alike are Conzen'd here.  
Some thought the Title of our Play to blame,  
They lik'd the thing , but yet abhor'd the Name :  
Like Modest Puncks, who all you ask afford,  
But , for the World, they would not name that word.  
Yet , if you'll credit what I heard him say,  
Our Poet meant no Scandal in his Play ;  
His Nuns are good which on the Stage are shown,  
And, sure, behind our Scenes you'll look for none.

F I N I S.